

Reagan: Soviet trip is conditional

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Ronald Reagan said Wednesday he will not travel to Moscow for a 1987 summit if he and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev cannot work out an acceptable date for a meeting in the United States later this year. Mr. Reagan said Soviet and American officials are discussing dates for this year's summit, but no agreement has been reached. The United States has proposed a meeting in June; the Soviets have countered with September. Mr. Reagan said Wednesday: "We've explained we can't have it in September" because that would fall too close to congressional elections in November. "I've got news for them," the president was quoted as telling a group of reporters at the White House. If Mr. Gorbachev refuses to go along with a U.S. timetable for this year, Mr. Reagan said: "There won't be any '87 summit in Moscow."

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Prince Hassan visits military school

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan on Wednesday called at the Marjeh Abdullah bin Al Hussein Military School for Infantry and met with its officers and troops. Prince Hassan was briefed on the training programmes at the school and later toured the different sections of the school. He also watched a field training exercise in which paratroopers took part.

Egypt, Israel continue talks

CAIRO (R) — Senior Egyptian and Israeli negotiators resumed talks on Wednesday on terms of arbitration of their dispute over the Sinai coastal enclave of Tabah and on improving relations in general. At the end of a first session on Tuesday in Cairo's Al Salam Hotel, the delegations split into two committees. One was focusing on the dispute over Tabah, held by Israel and claimed by Egypt, and the wording of the question to be put to arbitrators. Israel agreed in January to go to arbitration. The other was considering how to boost tourism, agriculture and industry which have failed to develop since the 1979 Israeli-Egyptian treaty.

10 coup plotters executed in Lagos

LAGOS (R) — Ten Nigerian military officers convicted of involvement in a coup plot last December were executed by firing squad on Wednesday, an official spokesman said. A military tribunal sentenced 13 officers, including former Minister General Mamman Vatsa, to death on Feb. 25 for their part in the plot to topple military ruler General Ibrahim Babangida.

Shara's optimistic over hostages

LONDON (AP) — Syria is optimistic that foreign hostages will be released from captivity in Lebanon and wants them to be freed safe and well, Foreign Minister Farouk Al Shara said Wednesday. Mr. Shara's optimism, however, gave no immediate hope for the freedom of at least 12 foreigners held in Lebanon, some for more than a year. The Syrian foreign minister, in Britain on an official visit, was asked at a news conference about the hostages, since Syria is believed to have some influence on guerrilla groups in Lebanon. "We have done all we could to secure their release, but unfortunately we were unable to achieve that objective so far," Mr. Shara replied. "But we are still optimistic."

Israelis killed detainee, DFLP says

BEIRUT (AP) — The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) said on Wednesday that Israel killed one of its members who was captured in a weekend infiltration attempt. A communiqué issued in Beirut by the Damascus-based DFLP said the commando was one of three Palestinians who infiltrated across the Lebanese border. Israel said Saturday two commandos were killed in the incident but made no mention of a third.

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Iraq secures Fao airspace

GCC defence chiefs study joint stand; Kuwait issues shoot-on-sight order

FAO PENINSULA, Iraq (R) — Iraq said on Wednesday it controlled the air space over Fao, a disputed oil terminal at the head of the Gulf occupied by Iran in a major cross-border offensive nearly a month ago.

The head of the Iraqi army's political department, Abdul Jabbar Mohsen, told reporters that Iranian defences around Fao included a group of earthen embankments, mortars, heavy machine-guns and some tanks. A three-pronged advance on Fao, aimed at pushing the Iranians back across the Shatt Al Arab waterway, has been held up by heavy mud and, at times, by bad weather. But Mr. Mohsen said: "We have artillery superiority and fully control the air space with jets and helicopter gunships." He was speaking at an army headquarters south of Iraq's main southern city of Basra. He said the spearhead of the Iraqi thrust was now between eight kilometres and 10 kilometres from Fao and advancing slowly on the Al Mamsha salt flats, about five kilometres north of the port, to prepare for a final attack. Last Thursday, Iraqi Lieutenant-General Sa'adi Ta'ama Al Jibouri, the Seventh Corps commander, told Reuters his men were within 10 kilometres of Fao at some points. Mr. Mohsen said Iraqi warplanes had flown more than 10,000 missions over Iranian positions at Fao and other sectors of the Gulf war's southern front. He said Iran, which opened the offensive on Feb. 9, still held an area of about 90 square kilometres on the Fao Peninsula. On Iran's later thrust into Iraqi mountains on the northern front, Mr. Mohsen said it was limited operation and that the Iranians occupied some heights east of the provincial capital of Sulaymaniyah. He said most of the heights were retaken by Iraq and that Iran had lost 850 men in what he called a "propaganda operation." On the southern front, reporters were taken in army jeeps on a 102-kilometre road leading to Fao. They saw heavy artillery and rocket launchers pounding Iranian positions and the military trappings necessary for an assault. Movement of vehicles was limited to the asphalt road because of mud either side. Iraq said earlier on Wednesday its planes had attacked a key Iranian oil complex in the northern Gulf and a military camp on the southern ground front. A military spokesman, quoted by the Iraqi News Agency (INA), said the warplanes also destroyed five Iranian boats in the northern Gulf off Iran. He did not identify the vessels. The spokesman said oil installations at Ganaveh, on the mainland northeast of Iran's main export terminal at Kharg Island, were set ablaze at 10:25 a.m. (0725 GMT) on Wednesday. He said the planes destroyed installations and a weapons' depot at a military camp in the border town of Hoseyniyeh, about 65 kilometres northeast of Basra, Iraq's second city after Baghdad. An Egyptian weekly said Wednesday an Egyptian military team has flown to Baghdad to supervise the airlift of Egyptian weapons to Iraq. The Cairo opposition weekly Al Shaab, organ of the Labour Socialist Party, said Egypt has stepped up its supply of arms and other military hardware to Iraq since Iran's new offensives began last month. Egypt has repeatedly denied it has any troops or military advisers in Iraq, but an Iraqi official said last year that Egyptian volunteers were fighting alongside Iraqi troops against Iran.

(Continued on page 3)

Police get sketch of Palme killer

STOCKHOLM (Agencies) — Swedish police were reported on Wednesday to have a sketch of the killer of Prime Minister Olof Palme, drawn by a woman artist who may have been the only witness to see the slayer's face and West German experts were to join efforts to identify the assassin. Police said the suspected professional killer was involved and said it was possible he was in radio contact with a waiting accomplice. The artist who may have seen the killer has sketched her impressions of the man, and West German experts are to help compile an "identikit" picture from her drawings. The possible breakthrough in the investigation came when the 22-year-old portrait painter reported seeing a man fitting the killer's description run past her soon after the murder. Police said the woman had a clear view of the man's face as he passed under a streetlight and had produced several "very interesting" sketches. West German police in Wiesbaden told Reuters they were sending one or two technical experts to Stockholm to examine the sketches. Swedish police said on Tuesday the killer was probably a professional gangster of the type hired to murder by "terrorist groups and others." They said the assassin escaped with the aid of at least one accomplice after the shooting in central Stockholm last Friday night. Officials said Wednesday police were mounting a vast security operation to protect dozens of world leaders who are expected to attend the funeral of Mr. Palme on March 15. The secretary of the ruling Social Democratic Party, Bo Torsson, told a news conference the guests were expected to include U.N. Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar and American Vice-President George Bush along with the prime ministers of India, Italy, Zimbabwe and Spain. "The security operation is going to be extremely exhaustive," Mr. Torsson said. Stockholm's city hall has been chosen for the civil funeral ceremony partly because it will be easy to seal off. Mr. Torsson said Mr. Palme had once expressed a wish for a civil ceremony in line with Social Democratic Party tradition. Asked why the funeral would be held so long after Mr. Palme's death, Mr. Torsson said it was the family's wish that the question of his successor should be resolved beforehand. Acting Prime Minister Ingvar Carlsson, already nominated Social Democratic Party leader, is due to be confirmed as prime minister by parliament on March 12. A West German federal police spokesman said the Wiesbaden office was giving Sweden technical help on identikit systems to help identify Mr. Palme's assassin. He said investigations so far had not revealed any link between the murder and West German guerrillas. Sweden has already sent West German pictures of the two bullet holes fired at Mr. Palme and his wife Lisbet soon after they left a cinema. Palme murder may spell end of innocent age for Sweden, page 4

8 NATO soldiers buried by avalanche

OSLO (R) — Eight Norwegian soldiers taking part in a NATO military exercise in northern Norway were buried on Wednesday in an avalanche, a NATO spokesman said. Earlier the Norwegian news agency reported 30 soldiers had been buried. Lieutenant Colonel Gunnar Mjell told Reuters a 100-man rescue party and 11 helicopters were searching the area at Vassland, near the northern port of Narvik. He said the avalanche occurred about 1300 GMT on Wednesday, and the eight soldiers were part of a 30-man company participating in the "Anchor Express" exercise, NATO's largest military manoeuvres of the year. The avalanche happened as one of the heaviest storms to hit northern Norway battered NATO ships taking reinforcements to the Anchor Express exercise.

King visits Iraq, meets president

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein returned to Amman on Wednesday evening at the end of a brief visit to Baghdad where he met with President Saddam Hussein and other Iraqi leaders. During the visit, which lasted several hours, the King held a closed meeting with President Hussein and then an enlarged meeting attended by aides on both sides. President Hussein informed the King on the situation at the battlefield in the north and south and said that Iraqi forces were continuing to crush the invading Iranian forces. Both leaders also reviewed Arab affairs. The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Zaid Al Rifai, Court Minister Adnan Abu Odeh, Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'd Ibn Zaid and Gen. Sharif Zaid Ibn Shaker, commander-in-chief of the Jordanian Armed Forces. On the Iraqi side it was attended by First Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yassin Ramadan and Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz. Upon returning to Amman King Hussein sent a cable to President Hussein in which he said that he was certain that the Iraqi people and armed forces will come out victorious against the enemy. The battle, which the Iraqi forces are waging in defending the homeland, will be soon crowned with victory, the King said. "The government and people of Jordan share with me my pride in your heroic struggle and appreciation of your efforts to defend the homeland against the Iranian aggression," the King's cable to President Hussein said.

Shultz: U.S. should not stop efforts for peace in Mideast

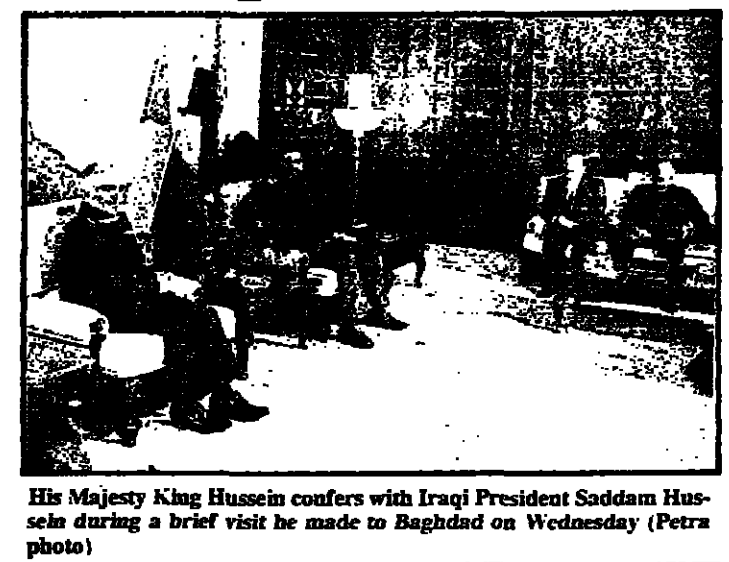
WASHINGTON (USIA) — U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz, testifying before a House of Representatives panel on Tuesday, said the U.S. should not stop trying to work for peace in the Middle East. Mr. Shultz also told the House of Representatives "Subcommittee on Foreign Operations" that the Palestinians must have a role in the peace process. In response to questions about the recent announcement by King Hussein that Jordan was terminating political coordination with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leadership, Mr. Shultz underscored the need to involve Palestinians in the Middle East peace process. "The question always is what Palestinians," he said. "The main thing we want in anyone who sits down at a peace table is that they are ready to make peace, and that therefore, they renounce violence," Mr. Shultz said. It is also essential that they accept the fact that Israel exists and is there to stay, he said. He said the United States has "struggled with King Hussein and with the government of Israel... to find a Palestinian representation that would have the kind of legitimacy and support of the Palestinian community so that they would be seen as real representatives..." "Our objective has always been very simple and clear-cut," Mr. Shultz said. "We wanted to see emerge from whatever process a direct negotiation between Israel, and, in this case, Jordan with legitimate and acceptable Palestinian representation. That has been the objective that has guided everything that we have done." To facilitate Jordan's task, Mr. Shultz said, "we said at one point that if there were an invitation to the PLO to a conference, we would not interpose an objection to the invitation." He emphasised that his remarks did not "imply activities beyond the receipt by somebody of an invitation." He described as "long and arduous and creative" King Hussein's effort to get the leaders of the PLO and Chairman Yasser Arafat in particular to accept United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, to accept Israel and to be ready to negotiate with Israel, and to renounce violence. "There were times when the King was quite optimistic that that might be done," the secretary told the subcommittee. "The leaders of the PLO were given every opportunity. People bent over backward to see how this process could be moved forward. And in the end, the PLO leadership would not move. I think it's a great mistake and a tragedy on their part." In summing up, Mr. Shultz said: "Even though the difficulties are great and the probabilities are never in your favour, we should never stop trying to work for peace in the Middle East."

...as militia leaders meet in Syria

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — Syria's allies in Lebanon opened talks on Wednesday aimed at averting militia violence in west Beirut and consolidating opposition to Lebanese President Amin Gemayel. Progressive Socialist Party (PSP) leader Walid Junblatt and Shi'ite Amal leader Nabih Berri met Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam, main architect of a peace pact which they signed in December with former rightist militia chief Elie Hobeika. Mr. Berri told reporters that an enlarged meeting with Mr. Khaddam, to include leaders of parties forming Lebanon's "National Unity Front," was also expected to be held. Sources quoted by Reuters said Mr. Berri, Mr. Junblatt and Mr. Hobeika were expected to meet privately either before or after the meeting. The radical Shi'ite Hizbollah (Party of God), which rejects any compromise with the Christians and is jostling to expand its power in west Beirut, is absent from the Damascus talks. Syria's allies urged Mr. Gemayel to resign after he refused to endorse the peace accord, designed to end Lebanon's 11-year civil war by trimming powers of the Christian-held presidency and giving the Muslim majority more say in government. But they have failed to bring effective military or political pressure on the 44-year-old Maronite leader, while recent friction between Hizbollah and leftist militias has raised fears of a violent showdown in west Beirut. The Damascus talks coincide with a fresh peace search launched by the Vatican. During a meeting with the Pope

Knesset rejects bill to annex W.Bank and Gaza

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Israel's parliament defeated a bill to annex the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip on Wednesday after Prime Minister Shimon Peres warned that if the proposal was passed, it could start another Middle East war. The bill, sponsored by Gush Cohen of the extremist right-wing Tehiya Party, was overwhelmingly rejected by a show of hands. It was the first time an annexation bill was brought to the Knesset floor for a vote since the West Bank and the Gaza Strip were occupied in 1967. Arguing against the bill, Peres said his government "will not countenance such unrealistic, dangerous, useless ideas which are fraught with the danger of war." Cohen was the legislator who drafted the 1980 law formally annexing East Jerusalem. Peres also said the assassination of Zafar Al Masri, mayor of Nablus, the West Bank's largest city, would not deter his plan to gradually give Palestinians increased control over their daily lives. same 1985 period. If the decline continued, he said, "it could be a kind of crisis for tourism in Egypt." Mr. Badr told the weekly Al-Mussawwar the police were alarmed as a precaution against a sympathy revolt. "We have withdrawn all arms from the police camps out of fear that men in other camps may rise under tension and out of sympathy with their colleagues," he said. "We have taken this as a precautionary temporary measure." Although the army was thinning out its presence in Cairo, security would continue to be shared, he said, adding: "Gradually the police will take over." Police round up more freed convicts, page 2



His Majesty King Hussein confers with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein during a brief visit he made to Baghdad on Wednesday (Petra photo)

Car blast, battles kill 4 in Sidon...

SIDON, Lebanon (Agencies) — A car bomb blast and a gunbattle between militia forces killed four people on Wednesday, killing at least four people, security sources said. A saloon car laden with 60 kilograms of dynamite exploded prematurely in a main Sidon street, killing its driver and a woman passenger, the sources, quoted by Reuters, said. Three passersby were injured, one of them seriously. Witnesses told Reuters the blast wrecked six cars and damaged nearby buildings. The real target of the attack was not known and no group claimed responsibility. An hour-long gunbattle flared shortly after the explosion between military police of the mostly Sunni "Popular Liberation Army" (PLA) and Shi'ite Amal militiamen in eastern Sidon. Two people were killed and four hurt as machinegun fire and blasts from rocket-propelled grenades sent panic-stricken civilians scurrying for cover, Reuters said. The fighting was the first between Amal and the PLA, which has controlled Sidon since Israeli troops ended a three-year occupation last June. Witnesses quoted by AP said the clash erupted after PLA militiamen wounded an Amal gunman as they shot in the air to clear a path through traffic for ambulances ferrying bombing casualties to hospital. However, local sources said tension had risen recently and Sidon ignored a strike call from Amal leader Nabih Berri on Tuesday to mark the first anniversary of a bomb explosion that killed two Amal guerrilla leaders in the south. Amal is the strongest force in most of the south, but its power in Sidon is limited to the Shi'ite suburb of Harat Sidon. PLA leader Mustafa Saad held emergency talks with Amal officials to halt Wednesday's battle. An Amal statement later described it as an isolated incident and expressed "cohesion and fraternity" with the PLA. Violence in Sidon coincided with escalating hostilities in and around Beirut between militiamen and soldiers loyal to President Amin Gemayel and his Syrian-backed leftist opponents. Police said three people were killed and 19 wounded in tank, artillery and rocket duels around the army-held mountaintop garrison of Souq Al Gharb, 12 kilometres southeast of Beirut. Among the casualties were two soldiers killed and five wounded. The rest were civilians and Progressive Socialist Party militiamen.

Army withdraws tanks from streets of Cairo

CAIRO (R) — Egypt's army, winding down its street vigil in Cairo after police riots a week ago, pulled back tanks and other armoured vehicles on Wednesday as the new interior minister disclosed that the police had been temporarily disbanded. Troops with machine-guns were still guarding security police camps near the Pyramids, the area worst hit by last week's rampage, but armoured vehicles deployed outside were removed. The army appeared to be regrouping its armour on Wednesday to move it back to base during the night curfew when streets are clear. Officials say the curfew should be lifted by the weekend. Armoured vehicles have also been removed from most curfew checkpoints in another sign that Egypt's gravest crisis since President Hosni Mubarak came to power in 1981 has died down. But Interior Minister Zaki Badr, appointed last week to head Egypt's security apparatus, said in a magazine interview that arms had been withdrawn from all police barracks following the rampage by some 17,000 police conscripts. Tourism Minister Fouad Sultan, overseer of one of Egypt's main sources of hard currency, meanwhile said revenue from tourism had dropped by 40 per cent since the riots. He told reporters only 8,000 tourists had arrived since the riots began, against 18,000 during the

107 killed in riots, official discloses

CAIRO (R) — Deputy Interior Minister Farouk El Heini said 107 people were killed and 715 wounded in last week's Egyptian security police riots. Earlier government reports put the death toll at 36. Mr. Heini told the semi-official Al-Ahram newspaper in a late night edition that the army and police were hunting for 8,011 police conscripts still at large. He said 21,644 conscripts will be discharged after widespread destruction in Giza, near the Pyramids.

Haj Hassan addresses Arab labour conference

BAGHDAD (Petra) — Minister of Labour and Social Development Khaled Al Haj Hassan said in Baghdad that the Israeli occupation authorities have seized 2,508,348 dunams of Arab land and built 185 colonies since 1967. Israel, he said, is continuing arbitrary policies against the Arab people under its rule, making it impossible for them to remain in their homeland after seizing their lands and controlling their water resources.

The minister was addressing the 14th Arab labour conference which opened in the Iraqi capital Tuesday evening. The conference is attended by labour ministers from various Arab countries.

In his address to the conference, Mr. Haj Hassan referred to a United Nations mission which visited the Middle East region in January to investigate the condition of Arab workers under Israeli rule and he said that Jordan supplied the mission with reports exposing Israeli atrocities against the Arab population in general and the Arab workers and their unions in particular. The Israelis pursue a policy of violating the human rights of Arab people and the sanctity of their holy places in defiance of all international laws and principles, the minister said. He went on to say that the eviction of Arab people from their land, the seizure of Arab land and other inhuman practices are all designed to obliterate the Arab character from Palestinian land. Nearly 45 per cent of the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip has now been seized by the Israelis who have built 47 colonies around Jerusalem alone, the minister pointed out.

Mr. Haj Hassan noted that Jordan was the first among Arab countries to extend total support for the Arab Labour Organisation (ALO) because it addresses itself to bettering workers' conditions and improving their skills and efficiency.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan called on the International Labour Organisation (ILO) conference in 1977 to establish a special fund for compensating workers and efforts are being exerted to work out an integrated formula based on that proposal that would safeguard the interests of countries importing or exporting workers, the minister pointed out.

The minister called on the ALO to play a leading role in helping the Arab nation to deal with the challenges it faces and he referred to a report by the ALO general secretary which called on Arab countries to help facilitate the movement and employment of Arab workers and to help Arab countries overcome the consequences of economic recession. Mr. Haj Hassan said that the Arab World has been badly hit by the drop in oil revenues which, in turn, caused a retreat in development and led to the laying off of nearly half a million workers.

A solution for the problem of unemployed workers requires cooperation between ALO and Arab governments, the minister said. He said Jordan supports the ALO's secretary general in his call for promoting and developing national Arab organisations concerned with workers to help them solve labour-related problems. The minister called on Arab countries to give priority to Arab workers over foreign workers and to create incentives which would attract highly-skilled Arab workers employed abroad. He also suggested the initiation of projects that would absorb returning workers to help in the development process. The present difficult economic situation in the Arab World, the minister continued, makes it incumbent on all Arab states to coordinate efforts and come up with a common strategy for developing human resources.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Prince Hassan receives IDB president

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Tuesday received the visiting president of the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) to review scopes of cooperation between the IDB and Jordanian financial institutions. The meeting was attended by Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Hisham Al Khatib.

RSS to help JVA in computer affairs

AMMAN (Petra) — The Royal Scientific Society (RSS) will help the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) in computer-related affairs, according to an agreement the two sides signed at the RSS on Wednesday. Under the agreement, the RSS computer section will provide technical advice to the JVA and will take part in selecting and installing computers for the authority and its data bank. The agreement is within the JVA's plans to improve services in the exploitation and distribution of water for irrigation purposes in the Jordan Valley and improving social conditions for the population. The agreement was signed by RSS President Fakhraddin Daghestani and JVA Director General Munther Haddadin.

Local firm wins JD 2.7m contract

AMMAN (Petra) — A JD 2,737,000 agreement was signed Wednesday at the Ministry of Transport between the ministry and the Jordan pre-cast concrete company for the manufacture and supply of 170 reinforced concrete sleepers for the Ajlun Railway Corporation. The agreement was signed by Transport Minister Farhi Obeid and the Social Security Corporation (SSC) director general and chairman of the company's board of directors Mahdi Farhan. The minister stressed the importance of supporting the Jordanian economy by awarding contracts to local companies which, he said, will provide job opportunities for Jordanian labourers and reduce production costs.

UNRWA director meets refugees

AMMAN (J.T.) — Director of United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) affairs in Jordan, Mr. Per Olof Hallqvist, Wednesday met with refugee notables from Irbid, Martyr Azmi Al Mufti (Huss) camp and Irbid camp during which information and views on UNRWA's operations and funding were exchanged. Mr. Hallqvist told the notables that despite the agency's financial situation, it is confident that it can go through 1986 without having to resort to service cuts. The representatives called on the agency to introduce improvements in the agency's services, particularly in the education and welfare assistance programmes, according to a UNRWA press release.

British team to excavate Tal Al Sa'idieh

AMMAN (Petra) — The British Museum, in cooperation with Alia, the Royal Jordanian Airline, will on March 23 start archaeological excavations in Tal Al Sa'idieh area in the Jordan Valley. The area dates back to the Bronze and Iron Ages. The working team comprises 15 experts in archaeology and science from the museum's Department of Antiquities for Western Asia. The excavations follow a preliminary dig conducted last year during which the team discovered buildings dating back to 900 B.C. in addition to pottery and utensils.

Commerce chamber reviews activities

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordanian national committee for the international chamber of commerce held a meeting Wednesday to discuss topics related to commercial prizes for the most successful businessmen and to evaluate an international arbitration seminar held in Athens on March 3. The committee also discussed the annual conference of the international chamber of commerce which will be held in Spain in May, the chamber's congress meeting to be held in New Delhi during the next year as well as the chamber's annual report for the past year.

Court sentences Captagon smuggler

AMMAN (Petra) — The military court has sentenced Mohammad Oglio to eight years in prison with hard labour for smuggling Captagon pills. The general military governor endorsed the sentence.

Comedy thriller to kick off 1986 dinner theatre season

AMMAN (J.T.) — "My Giddy Aunt," a two-act comedy-thriller and another production of renowned British comedian turned producer Derek Nimmo will be staged at the Jordan International Hotel playhouse on March 12.

The event, which will mark the opening of the dinner theatre season in Amman, is organised by the hotel in cooperation with British Airways.

Mr. Nimmo is well-known among Jordanian theatre lovers for two earlier productions he presented at the hotel, one of which was "There's a Girl in my Soup."

Starring in "My Giddy Aunt" is one of Britain's best loved actresses, Peggy Mount. Mr. Peter Sallis, who co-stars with Ms.

Iraqis secure airspace over Fao

(Continued from page 1)

AP adds from Riyadh: Senior military officers of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) met in Saudi Arabia on Wednesday to coordinate defence strategies against possible offensives of the Iran-Iraq war, as Kuwait reiterated "shoot-on-site" orders against intruders.

The meeting brought together chiefs of staff of the armed forces of member states of the GCC — Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Oman and Kuwait.

Of the six states, Kuwait is the closest to the Iran-Iraq war zone. "There are clear orders to the armed forces to shoot on sight any intruders of the defined (territorial) lines," Kuwaiti Defence Minister Sheikh Salem Al Sabah told reporters after briefing parliament on the Gulf war developments. He disclosed that two incursions

took place recently and were promptly handled by the Kuwaiti armed forces.

"I explained (to parliament) how Iranian helicopter gunships intercepted a Kuwaiti navy unit south of the Kobar in our waters" last month, he said. "The unit alerted the Iranian aircraft that they exceeded our territorial water limits."

"The second incident involved one (Iranian) jetliner, which flew near (Kuwaiti) prohibited military areas. Our air force pilots and air defence men were on the alert to confront the jetliner. But we arrived in good time to divert the course of the jetliner to the Kuwait international airport."

Sheikh Salem gave no further details. Kobar is part of a chain of islands in the Gulf between Iraq and Kuwait.

The new Iranian offensive on the Fao Peninsula brought the Gulf war within 24 kilometres from Kuwait's Bubiyan Island.

"The GCC foreign ministers on Monday concluded a three-day conference on the war situation with a resolution to seek Arab and international efforts to push through a peace settlement between the two belligerents."

The ministers, denouncing Iran for occupying and maintaining military presence at Fao, also rejected Iranian threats to their countries and invited the GCC chiefs of staff to devise a combined strategy to deal with all eventualities.

The GCC's 3,000-strong, Saudi-led combined rapid deployment force has been ready to act if any of the six member countries were threatened, GCC diplomats announced.

The two-year-old force, stationed at the Hafir Al Baten region, in the northeastern sector of Saudi Arabia, is equipped with tanks, aircraft and an early warning air defence radar system.

Earlier in the day, the chair of Kuwait received a message from



NEW OFFICERS — Public Security Department Director Lieutenant-General Abdul Hadi Al Majall (centre) Wednesday presents degrees to 39 graduates from Mu'ta University who have completed their four-year study course and joined the security forces. At the ceremony, held at the police officers training institute in Amman, Lt. Gen. Majall said that his department was keen on raising the standard and efficiency of police officers (Petra photo)

Workers at JDEC hold sit-in to protest closure order

AMMAN (J.T.) — The staff and workers of the Arab Jerusalem District Electricity Company (JDEC) have staged a sit-in at the company's offices and warehouses in Arab Jerusalem in protest against an Israeli court order to seize the company's assets and halt its operations, according to the Jordanian News Agency, Petra.

Petra said that the company's workers' union sent groups of workers to different offices, transformer stations and warehouses to stage the protest in an attempt to stop the Israelis from carrying out the court order.

Earlier reports said that the Israelis have shut down the company's offices and sealed its doors on the pretext that JDEC has not paid its \$12 million debt to the Israeli electricity company.

The Israeli authorities over the past years have prompted the closure of the Arab company and the liquidation of its assets by imposing exorbitant taxes on it and by preventing the company from installing new power generators needed to meet the growing demand for electricity from Arab residents within its own concession granted by the Jordanian government.

As a result, the company's field of operations continued to shrink, forcing Arabs to resort to the Israeli power company to obtain electricity. JDEC was forced to buy power from the Israeli company three years ago at a very high price because the company was committed to supply electric power to the Arab region. This situation led to more debts for JDEC.

Jordan condemns Israeli measure

The Israeli measure was condemned Tuesday by the Jordanian government as a means of obliterating Arab character from the holy city. Minister of Occupied Territories Affairs Taher Kana'an said that the Israeli order for the closure of the Arab company was clearly designed to wipe out another symbol of Arab presence in Jerusalem.

The Israelis claim they closed the company due to its heavy debts, but these debts were due to Israel's violations of the JDEC's concession in the first place which in turn forced the Arab company to buy energy at very high rate, the minister said.

The play will be presented at the hotel from March 12 running through March 16.

Pharmacists donate JD 2,000 to national cancer centre fund

AMMAN (J.T.) — The General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) in Jordan has received a donation of JD 2,000 from the Jordanian Pharmacists Association (JPA) to help establish the national cancer centre at the University of Jordan Hospital in Amman. JPA President Ghalib Sabbarini presented a cheque for the sum to GUVS President Abdullah Al Khatib on Wednesday. GUVS hopes to establish the

centre early next year on a two dunum plot and has raised JD 500,000 so far for the project. It is hoped that donations will amount to JD 1 million by the start of 1987 to help the project get underway, according to a GUVS spokesman. He said that the projected centre will have different sections for children and adults and laboratories as well as doctors and nurses' living quarters.

Khatib, Talhouni confer with Soviet women's delegation

AMMAN (Petra) — A delegation of Soviet women conferred here Tuesday with Mr. Bahjat Al Talhouni, the president of Jordanian-Soviet Friendship Society. The visiting delegation discussed Jordanian-Soviet ties and Mr. Talhouni spoke of the different roles Jordanian women play in all walks of life.

The two sides examined the prospect of exchanging visits by women delegations in order to have a clearer picture of the activities of Jordanian and Soviet

women. Mr. Talhouni, who is also a member of the Upper House of Parliament, expressed deep appreciation to the Soviet Union.

Earlier Tuesday, the delegation was received by Information Minister Mohammad Al Khatib with whom they reviewed scopes of cooperation between Jordan and the Soviet Union in social, cultural and technical fields. The minister presented the delegation with a token gift to commemorate their visit.

Hamzeh okays designs for new health clinics

AMMAN (Petra) — Health Minister Zaid Hamzeh Wednesday approved final designs for the establishment of six primary health clinics and two integrated centres in the country.

The minister reviewed the plans and discussed the projects during a meeting with a special task force entrusted with setting up the centres in different areas of Jordan.

Altogether, the Health Ministry plans to set up 25 primary health centres and 13 integrated centres around the country with the purpose of expanding health and medical services to all regions. The integrated centres include sections to provide care for children and pregnant women and they will offer first aid and emergency services in addition to carrying out surgical operations.

Later Wednesday, the minister met with a group of engineers employed by the Ministry of Public Works who have been entrusted with preparing plans for expanding the government hospital in Salt and Dr. Hamzeh endorsed the final plans for the project.

According to a ministry spokesman, the project entails constructing a four-storey annex to the hospital which will house 69 beds of which 37 will be used by children. The project also includes the installation of another operating theatre as well as other facilities.

Agricultural minister outlines benefits of cropping patterns

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Agriculture Ahmad Dakqhan Wednesday urged farmers to cooperate with the Ministry of Agriculture in the course of applying agricultural cropping patterns which he said have been introduced to improve harvests and ensure more income for farmers.

The minister said in a statement to the Jordanian News Agency, Petra, that the government's recent measures to offering subsidies to local farmers reflect government concern over farmers' conditions and are a bid to help them increase production.

Mr. Dakqhan said that the government has offered incentives to tomato growers who follow agricultural patterns set by the Ministry of Agriculture in an effort to avoid marketing problems for surplus crops in the market. The market is at times flooded with a surplus of locally produced crops which is bound to force prices down with consequent damage to farmers' interests, the minister pointed out. Mr. Dakqhan said that the cabinet's recent decision to help farmers financially serves as an encouragement for them and reflects concern over the national economic interest in general.

Water supplied to homes is fit to drink, Keilani says

AMMAN (Petra) — Water Authority of Jordan (WAJ) Director General Mohammad Saleh Al Keilani said Wednesday that drinking water reaching residents in all parts of Jordan through pipes or water trucks is potable and 100 per cent pure in accordance with World Health Organisation's (WHO) standards and specifications.

Mr. Keilani, who was obviously commenting on press reports on the water situation in Jordan, said that those wishing to write about the subject in the local press or wishing to make lectures about Jordan's water resources should first ask the WAJ for sound information. Mr. Keilani said that the Health

Ministry, in cooperation with the Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment and Amman Municipality, continues to control the quality of drinking water and conducts laboratory tests on samples taken from different water sources on a regular basis to ensure that the water is fit for drinking.

Nearly 90 per cent of Jordanian citizens drink water reaching them through water networks and the remainder receive water from trucks, but in both cases the water sources are controlled and tested. Mr. Keilani added. He said that the WAJ is willing to provide full information about water sources at any time and whenever requested.

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Carry on up the Jungle

MANY PEOPLE around the world may well interpret the latest American moves in southern Africa as yet another blunder in U.S. foreign policy. Why, they ask, is the U.S. supporting rebels bent upon toppling the Marxist government in Angola while extending an almost equal share of aid and weapons to the Mozambican government, whose ideology is no different from that of the Angolan leadership? Has consistency become another alien word to the U.S., the self-styled crusader against communism? They knit their brows.

Well, we in the Middle East need not waste our breath asking such a superfluous question since we already have the answer. Perhaps we should provide a hint to those who might still be wondering: Have a good look at the map of Africa and you will find Mozambique on the Indian Ocean side of the continent and Angola on the Atlantic side. It also means that the U.S. needs Mozambique, be it Marxist or Martian, to help Americans fulfill their self-assumed role as the policeman of the Indian Ocean and when the racist regime in South Africa falls, sooner or later, as it is bound to.

That also explains why the U.S. has broken all rules of consistent conduct; the instance of the U.S. providing \$5 million in aid to build a key railroad in Mozambique while extending help and support to saboteurs of vital rail links in Angola is only just another example.

American behaviour may be strange to most people from other parts of the globe, but we know better in the Middle East — the region that has borne the brunt of American double standards and devious policies. Just as the U.S. ensures that the end sufferers of its pro-Israeli policies remain to be the Arabs, Washington is also careful to see that the black masses of Africa bear the pain and sufferings while pursuing its "constructive engagement," which tends to be destructive in implementation. The glaring example is the 1,100 blacks who died in anti-apartheid protests in South Africa while Washington remained "constructively engaged" with the Pretoria regime. If that is not enough, one has only to note that the U.S. pledge of support, including aid and weapons, to the Angolan rebels came at a time when statistics showed that at least \$10 billion was the estimated amount of damages caused by the rebels in their frenzied fight against the Luanda government.

We do not know whether or not the increased American aid will enable the Angolan rebels to topple the government, but we do know one thing; it means further suffering for the poor millions in Angola.

ARABIC PRESS EDITORIALS

Al Ra'i: Joint efforts

AT a meeting with representatives of the Jerusalem area in the occupied Arab territory, King Hussein pledged to continue supporting the Arab people in the face of Israeli oppression. He also reviewed with them the various Jordanian efforts being made since 1967 to save the land and its people from Israeli occupation. Since past efforts did not achieve good results, the King said, Jordan can by no means stop helping the Arab brothers and extending assistance to them to strengthen their steadfastness. Jordan's help to the Palestinians has enabled the Arab people under Israeli occupation to maintain a heroic stand and defy all challenges and threats. In referring to the joint Jordanian-Palestinian endeavours to find a solution to the problem, King Hussein said that serious joint efforts can and must achieve good results. Therefore, he said, the present and future stages call for further joint efforts and further coordination on the part of the two peoples so that Israeli threats can be confronted and thwarted. If, he said, the Jordanian-Palestinian efforts are aborted, then the harm will affect the rest of the Arab Nation, and will open the way for Israel to consolidate its position.

Al Dustour: GCC warning

THE countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) have just issued a statement containing a warning to Iran to stop the war and end its aggression on Iraq. These countries had in the past tried to mediate between the two warring countries Iraq and Iran but were unsuccessful, and now they have adopted a hardened attitude towards the aggressors after discovering the evil intentions of the Tehran regime. This warning was issued after Iran has launched an attack clearly designed to occupy Iraqi territory after which more attacks could be launched on the GCC countries. The warning by the six GCC states comes at a time when Iran is clearly escalating its aggression and opening new fronts along its confrontation lines with Iraq. The warning was meant as an indication that the GCC states will not remain idle as they see their brothers in Iraq exposed to continuous aggression and that these states have now decided to put an end to Iran's challenges and threats. These states have formed a united force to deter any aggression and have demanded that Iran pull out its troops from Iraqi territory. This can only mean that the GCC states are determined to take action, and we hope this action will force Iran to end its war on the Arabs and respond to calls of peace.

Sawt Al Shaab: Priority to land, people

JORDAN is in disagreement with the PLO leadership over the course of political action to be taken in the coming stage. Therefore, the Jordanian leadership has opted to terminate political coordination with the organisation and offered the Palestinian people themselves the chance to express their opinion freely. But there are facts that are to be remembered: First, Jordan is committed to the national cause and will do all that is in its power to support the Arab people under Israeli rule and enhance their steadfastness. Second: Jordan will never act on behalf of the Palestinians and will not enter into direct negotiations with Israel and will continue to recognise the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people. Third: Jordan considers the Arab people of Palestine responsible for choosing their leadership. Termination of political coordination with the PLO means taking a step towards the re-examination of positions, because Jordan believes that priority should be given to the land and its people.

VIEW FROM AMERICA

Is world economy on the verge of collapse?

By Franz Schurmann

SAN FRANCISCO — There are striking contradictions evident between national American economic news and global economic news. The American stock exchanges are enthusiastic over the falling price of oil. They show no worry about the renewed fighting between Iraq and Iran.

On the other hand, world economic news shows great insecurity. The London oil markets are in confusion. Countries like Mexico find themselves plunged into new debt crises. Nigeria is becoming desperate. Venezuela whose officials originally conceived of the idea of OPEC back in the late 1950's now has virtually pulled out of OPEC.

Why should American economic markets be so happy over the economic news? On the surface, the indicators are

good. Inflation is down. Unemployment figures show a drop. Some action is being taken to reduce the federal budgetary deficit. Japan is renewing its restrictions on automobile exports to the U.S. And the Reagan government seems solid and strong.

If oil prices continue to drop, and if the Iraq-Iran war worsens, and if other new troubles arise in the Middle East, but American economic optimism continues, then, indeed, one might say that the Middle East has lost some of its importance in world affairs.

But I do not believe this. Even in regard to oil, the world's greatest oil reserves remain in the Middle East. And because oil is central to modern economies, what occurs in the Middle East will affect the economies and the politics of all the big nations of the world.

And more important than oil is the rising of the Islamic world from Southeast Asia through the Middle East deep into Africa. This rising will not soon end, and these countries will demand power and influence in world affairs.

Is American business blind? Are they pursuing illusions as the stock market did in 1929 when it felt that the economic boom would never end? And then it ended with a crash. And that crash brought in a world economic depression which began when the world economy which at the time Britain dominated came apart.

The world economy could come apart again. There are many powerful American officials who worry even as the buyers and sellers of stock

dance on their stock exchanges. The dollar is going down and down on world currency markets. The American stock market thinks that is good. It stimulates American exports. Bringing the value of the dollar down has been deliberate American monetary policy. Yet a weak dollar plus a low inflation rate could bring about some serious problems for the U.S. It will mean less foreign money coming in, grave problems for American banks with huge foreign loans, troubles for allies and friends of the U.S.

It is not impossible that the American stock market, which is always nervous and unreliable, could suddenly start to fall, as investors became aware of how precarious the world economy had become. We shall see in the months of

March, April, and beyond as to who is right: The American stock exchanges with their optimism, or the Saudis who have launched the current oil price war to force the Americans back to a more evenhanded position in the Middle East.

This is an election year in the United States. The Republicans face some serious Congressional challenges, and the Democrats want to make some important gains. Both want a prosperous domestic economy. They want no foreign troubles. They are happy that the Federal Reserve Board has made much, much more money available for the economy. They are delighted that the price of oil is going down. And they have even made a move to call for the indictment of the leader of the PLO, Yasser Arafat, on charges

of having been involved in terrorism against Americans. Pro-Israeli elements always become more influential during election years.

If, however, the American economy does begin to feel the effects of the oil price war, then the disregard which the American government has been showing the interests and concerns of the Arab and Muslim peoples will cost Washington a dear price.

The Arabs face grave challenges and this is a time when they must use all their shrewdness, their wisdom, their moral strength, their strong sense of will, and their faith that God gave them a great destiny in this world to avoid being washed away by American disregard and dangers from within the Arab and Muslim world itself.

Law-and-order rages before French elections

By Barbara Bright

Reuter

PARIS — "Crime on the decline for the first time in a decade," trumpet the ruling Socialists, who say the French people will soon be protected by a computerised, modernised police force.

"Drug traffic up by 300 per cent since the Socialists took power," responds the right-wing opposition — eight murders and 21 armed robberies every day, a car stolen every two minutes, a burglary every 80 seconds.

With less than two weeks remaining before the French parliamentary elections, the debate on law and order has become a key issue in the campaign.

The right accuses the left of laxity, of mollycoddling criminals and muddling the police chain of command.

A middle-aged woman doing her shopping on a recent cold morning said she found the law-and-order situation outrageous and predicted, as have most opinion polls, that the coalition of the Gaullist Rally for the Republic (RPR) and the centre-right Union for French Democracy (UFD) would win.

"The Socialists are finished," she snapped.

After a recent wave of bombing attacks in the French capital, the usually mild-mannered Jacques Toubon, RPR secretary general and a candidate for the interior ministry post if the right wins, no longer minced words.

"Three attacks in three days — that's too much it's high time that the government, the police, the courts did something. The task of the government is to assure by all means the security of all its citizens."

The government acted quickly after the bombings. A sweep through nine cities at dawn netted 64 suspects for questioning, and two days later 13 of them, all but one of Middle East origin, were expelled.

Draconian measures the right might applaud? But too little, too late, said most political commentators.

After unemployment and immigration, "insecurity" is the major pre-election concern for the French, according to the news magazines L'Express and Le Point, both of which treated the subject in recent cover stories.

Most of the verbal fireworks, however, is really squabbling about statistics.

Socialist Interior Minister Pierre Joxe, in charge of the 121,769-strong national police, maintains that overall crime and delinquency, which climbed steadily over the past 10 years, has now begun to decline.

Joxe, fighting back against opposition attacks on his law-and-order record, last week triumphantly asserted that the overall crime rate in 1983 had dropped by 2.78 per cent.

"For the first time we see a drop in crime statistics," Joxe told a pre-election rally of Socialist Party supporters in the Parisian suburb of Epinay-sur-Seine. He said the figures marked the first real fall in crime for two decades aside from a slight dip in 1976 attributed largely to changes in statistical methods.

Not true, said the right-wing Le Figaro, without citing its source. "Between 1984 and 1985 the growth in criminality increased by more than 16 per cent."

Interior ministry sources admit that violent crimes — the sort that get the press headlines — have increased but insist that overall crime is down.

The lower crime rate today, one source said, resulted from a slow but sure response to government policies of prevention across the board — civics courses in schools, community councils against delinquency, better organisation of the police force.

Last year the National Assembly agreed to modernise France's outdated police force, adding five billion francs (\$450 million) over five years to the police budget to pay for new cars, new firearms, computers and better officer training.

Jean-Pierre Bordier, federal secretary of the independent Federation of Police Unions (FASP), told Reuters the Joxe plan was a response to reforms long demanded by the police unions, traditionally at odds with the interior ministry.

Bordier praised the 350 community councils set up in 1981, when the Socialists took power, to prevent delinquency. He said petty crime was down by 40 per cent in some areas.

The new government, whether left or right, will have to tackle the problem of drugs, Bordier said, adding that half the crimes now committed are by people on drugs.

But the alarming drug statistics, according to interior ministry sources, are themselves an indication of increased police attention to illegal drug traffic.

To step up the fight against crime, the right proposes:

— To close French borders to "populations at high risk" for drug traffic, requiring visas for all non-European community nationals.

— To establish two-to-five-year prison terms for drug offenders, expelling foreign nationals after their release.

— To authorise random police identity checks to pick up illegal immigrants.

The right cites as support for its plan for stricter immigration laws a prison population that is one-quarter immigrant, the majority from North African countries, although immigrants account for less than five per cent of the overall French population.

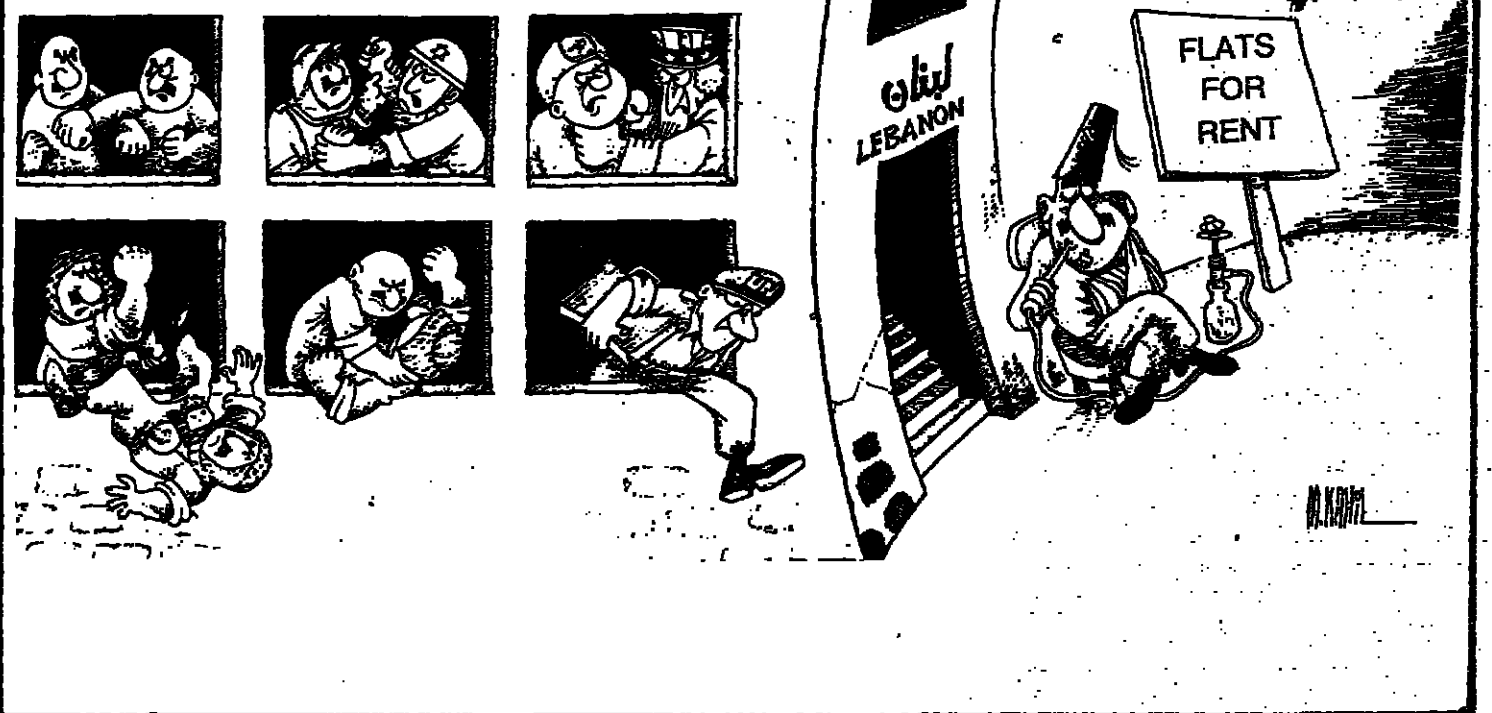
The interior ministry insists, however, that labelling the North African immigrants as largely criminal is a simplistic formula that foments racism.

Officials also deny that justice under the present government is lax. The number of people given prison sentences under the Socialists increased by eight per cent, and the number given life sentences increased by 44 per cent, according to justice ministry sources.

According to statistics from the Centre of Sociological Research for the law and investigating procedures cited in the daily Le Monde, the crime rate among immigrants or French is virtually the same if the same criteria are applied — age 17 to 30, male, unemployed, no home address, no next of kin, little education.

The right also plans to institute a 25-year jail penalty without parole for heinous crimes. Some right-wing politicians call for the re-institution of the death penalty, outlawed as one of his first acts by Socialist President Francois Mitterrand.

Despite the fury of the electoral campaign, two recent polls by Sofres indicate that 67 per cent of the French do not blame the government for the law-and-order situation, 23 per cent said they had more confidence in the opposition to fight against delinquency, but 48 per cent think there is no difference between the two parties.



Haiti government wins respite but more trouble looms

By Bernd Debusmann

Reuter

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti — Haiti's new leaders have bowed to popular pressure and promised action against the torturers of the Duvalier dictatorship in an attempt to maintain control over a country in ferment.

Coupled with substantial cuts in the price of sugar, flour and petrol, the promise ended widespread mob violence as well as a dispute within the government over the thorny problem of how to deal with former officials suspected of crime and human rights abuses.

But there is little doubt here that the pledge has won only temporary respite for a government which is viewed with suspicion and mistrust by many of Haiti's six million people.

Alarmed by widespread violence and the looting of homes of former Duvalier officials, the government announced last Thursday that it would seek the extradition of ousted dictator Jean-Claude Duvalier and his hated police chief, Albert Pierre.

Haitians suspected of abuses during 28 years of Duvalier family rule would be brought to justice and have their property seized, the statement said.

Popular anger here has been focused on members of the Ton-

tons Macoutes, the Duvalier's private police force which became a symbol of terror. In the days of civil chaos after Duvalier's departure on February 7, dozens of Tontons were lynched, many of them hacked to pieces.

The announcement cooled tempers in Haiti, but the events leading up to it raised doubts about the government's ability to gauge the mood of the country.

"Haiti is bubbling like a cauldron," a Western diplomat said. "It takes a lot of political skill to deal with the hopes and expectations raised by the end of the Duvalier era. There are a lot of pent up frustrations that can turn into violence."

Both the composition of the five-member council now running Haiti and some of its actions have fuelled charges that it is bent on perpetuating the old order, rather than reforming the structure of the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.

"Duvalierism without Duvalier" has become a slogan used equally by the militant Roman Catholic priests who were in the forefront of the anti-Duvalier movement and by voodoo leaders who also claim to have contributed to the dictator's fall.

Sources close to the council say its three military and two civilian members were chosen by Duvalier

the day he left. With the exception of Justice Minister Gerard Gourgue, all served in senior posts under Duvalier.

Council member Alix Cineas, minister without portfolio in the 13-man cabinet, had close ties to Duvalier and council adviser Prosper Avrio was his personal bodyguard.

Critics say some of the events preceding the announcement of action against Duvalier officials prove that many of the men now holding power not only sympathise with the old regime but are also incompetent and insensitive.

On the night of February 23, a military escort took Albert Pierre — who had a reputation for brutality as police chief — from his refuge in the Brazilian Embassy to the airport and put him on a jet chartered with government help.

Pierre's departure caused widespread anger. Justice Minister Gourgue complained he had not been consulted and said the decision to let him go was "shocking". Three hours after a ceremony held to mark the end of the Duvalier era, former secret police chief Luc Desir arrived at the international airport with a military escort for an Air France flight.

But his attempt to leave was frustrated by an angry crowd which converged on the terminal, alerted by a report on the church-run

radio Soleil.

Troops fired into the air and lobbed tear gas grenades to break up the crowd. Desir was whisked away to protective custody as the army deployed an armoured personnel carrier to protect the Air France plane and chase protesters from the runway.

Government sources said the incident prompted an emergency meeting of the council which turned into a shouting match between Gourgue and his colleagues.

The justice minister won the day and was given the go-ahead to make a radio statement that Desir would be put on trial for torture and murder.

"Moreover, the minister of justice stands ready to intervene against all criminals whom the public will make known," he said.

But a western diplomat said: "That statement came just a little too late. The mobs are already on the rampage, out of control."

Looters broke into Desir's house just after dawn on Wednesday — starting two days of looting that spread across the city and forced the government to impose a curfew.

Unrest finally died down after another government statement pledging action against former officials and giving notice that the council would seek the return of both Duvalier and Pierre.

Palme killing may spell end of age of innocence for Sweden

By Simon Haydon

Reuter

STOCKHOLM — The killing of Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme, evoking comparisons with the assassination of U.S. President John F. Kennedy in 1963, could spell the end of an idealistic age that created a model welfare state.

As Sweden recovers from the initial horror of Palme's cold-blooded murder last Friday, officials fear that the violent removal of the most powerful protagonist of social democracy could usher in a wave of cynicism.

Deputy Foreign Minister Pierre Schori told Reuters in an interview: "This presents a major test for Sweden... Whether we can continue to build our society with the same gusto as before, proving it was not a solo effort."

He said Palme liked to quote a Swedish poet when criticised about his low-key security. "Together we build an open city, not fortifications."

"You can call it innocence, but nothing like this has happened to Sweden before," Schori said.

Bishop of Stockholm Krister Stendahl, who lived in the United States when Kennedy was killed, said Swedes were confused over how to cope psychologically with Palme's murder but that Swedish democracy was deep-rooted.

Former Austrian Chancellor Bruno Kreisky, in a tribute to Palme broadcast Monday on Swedish radio, said "The whole world feels his murder in the same way as when Kennedy was shot."

Kennedy's death marked a watershed in modern U.S. history, and Swedish conservative leader Ulf Adelsohn, one of Palme's fiercest political opponents, said after Friday's murder: "Nothing in Sweden will ever be the same again."

One immediate fear is that it will destroy an open society in which a prime minister can move around without bodyguards.

Foreign Minister Sten Andersson said: "We must make sure that our open society is not transformed into a closed one by far-reaching security measures... I hope we can still have a society where we can take that risk."

With the death of Palme, Swe-

den has lost the second of its post-war architects. Tage Erlander, the social democratic prime minister credited with transforming a rural country into a modern industrial state, died last year.

Sweden today has the world's most extensive welfare state. Its population of 8.3 million is pampered by a cradle-to-grave system financed by taxes which are among the highest in the world.

Palme's ruling Social Democrats during elections last year portrayed the conservative opposition as heartlessly favouring a society where the weak would suffer.

The Social Democrats, who have ruled Sweden for 47 of the last 53 years, were re-elected, with Palme moderating his campaign to match a rightward drift in the national mood by preaching a message of political and economic pragmatism.

Shortly before he died, Palme faced a minor rebellion by grassroots leftwingers in the party who saw him as placing the burden of economic recovery on the workers and allowing the rich to reap

huge profits from a booming stock market.

The September election showed a rebelling of the vote for the Swedish Liberal party, led by the young and dashing Bengt Westerberg who emphasised social responsibility without Socialism.

Schori said it was difficult to predict the long-term effects of Palme's killing but added that the feeling in the nation was that "society should not give in to terrorism."

The police have said there is no indication so far who carried out the murder.

"We must not give up our way of life, our international struggle for peace and justice — this is the feeling in the grass roots of Sweden now," Schori said.

The liberal daily Dagens Nyheter predicted the country could withstand the blow of Palme's death. "A well-organised society like Sweden's will recover its balance even after the terrible thing that has happened," it said.

But Stendahl said anger and negative feelings following Palme's death would take a long time to wear off.

New treaty to save old ox

Under a new tripartite treaty, small and underfunded conservation departments in Kampuchea, Laos and Vietnam are joining forces to save the kouprey, a rare wild ox whose genes could improve modern cattle. Elizabeth Kent is the editor of "World Wildlife News." She recently returned from Vietnam where she was researching a book on the effects of 30 years of war on the Vietnamese environment.

HANOI, Vietnam — Its portrait was painted by prehistoric humans on the walls of their caves, and its form was carved by the Khmer people in the ancient temple of Angkor Wat. Never captured and on the verge of extinction, the kouprey is the only primitive species of wild cattle to escape the net of science.

Sightings of this elusive animal, which resembles the ox, are rare. It is thought that the world population consists of just 100-200 individuals, all of whom roam the borderlands between Thailand, Kampuchea, Laos and Vietnam.

Now, despite their political differences, Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea have signed a joint management plan for saving the kouprey.

The agreement is the first of its type in Indochina, and envisions

the establishment of trans-frontier reserves and cooperative anti-poaching measures. It was inspired by University of Hanoi Professor Vo-Quy, Vietnam's pre-eminent environmentalist, and Dr. John Mackinnon, kouprey project leader at the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

The unknown object of this diplomatic achievement, the kouprey (*Bos sauveli*), is no mere academic curiosity from the Pleistocene age. Scientists are interested in its genes, which they see as a potential source of desirable characteristics — such as disease resistance and hardiness — which could be bred into strains of domestic cattle.

Biologists believe that the kouprey may be immune to rinderpest, an acute contagious viral disease which is fatal to domestic cattle. If crossbreeding between

the kouprey and domestic cattle were successful, a hybrid animal resistant to this killer disease could be developed and stock losses sharply reduced, especially in Africa.

Declared Kampuchea's national animal by Prince Sihanouk in 1964, the kouprey first became known to science in 1937. Since then only a handful of official sightings have been recorded.

Vietnam has perhaps two surviving kouprey populations thought to number no more than 20 in total. Late last year an expedition of Vietnamese scientists travelled along the Kampuchean border in search of one of these groups. They found only the horns of a specimen which they believe had been shot recently by local hunters.

The legendary shyness of the creature they were pursuing was only one reason for their failure. Land mines are strewn through this thickly forested region, a factor which has hampered wildlife research in rainforests throughout Indochina.

Following sightings of several kouprey on the Thai/Kampuchean

border in 1982, a team from the Thai Wildlife Conservation Division was dispatched to the area. The expedition came to an abrupt halt when the team's guide stepped on a mine.

All prior attempts by scientists to capture a kouprey in the wild have ended in failure. A mission organised in 1970 by a number of international conservation organisations was cut short by the advent of the monsoon and the war in Kampuchea.

But Professor Pierre Pfeffer, formerly president of WWF France, was lucky enough to obtain the only existing photo of a kouprey. His fleeting glance ended when the camera shutter clicked, and, as he describes it, "he just vanished into the trees."

Unless the new treaty puts a stop to the hunting of kouprey by soldiers and villagers, this shy and mysterious animal may be doomed. As the only wild ancestor of domestic cattle left unstudied, its genetic secrets, and the opportunity to use them for stock improvement, will perish with it — Earth's last feature.



This is thought to be the world's only photo of the Kouprey, a rare wild ox (Photo by Pierre Pfeffer — WWF)

Randa Habib's

Bravo JTV

WHEN a good decision is taken it should be praised. This is the way I feel. And when the decision comes in response to public demand, it deserves stronger applause.

It was through this corner that I expressed the feeling of frustration of many viewers towards JTV's policy regarding the late shows on its foreign programme channel. At that time programmes screened after the news at ten used to be interrupted by the 11 O'clock news in Arabic, when only a few minutes were left before the programme ended.

The foreign channel, now called "Channel Two," broadcasts news in Hebrew, in English and French apart from the main Arabic news at 8 O'clock, which is broadcast on both channels.

The recent suppression of the second 11 O'clock Arabic news bulletin is a source of joy for all viewers of that channel. It is fortunate that JTV took this wise decision, and for this they should be thanked.

And since a complement never goes alone, I take the opportunity to note that the series and movies screened on Channel Two are generally very good. But unfortunately some like Dallas are, in my opinion, lousy, yet I suppose that this series still has many fans.

But on the whole, JTV has made a lot of progress. Two remarks still remain to be made: Watch spelling mistakes in announcements; it is rare that at least one mistake is not spotted there. And finally, watch the pictures of Arab leaders in the news bulletin; the Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak should not be mixed up with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

Pepper market heats up as output falls

The price of pepper has tripled in six months as the effects of bad weather in the principal growing countries work through. Kieran Cooke reports.

JAKARTA — For centuries traders fought to control the world's spice business and to colonise the richest spice area of all, the islands of the Indonesian archipelago.

Now a new battle has begun over pepper, the most important of the spices, accounting for more than 40 per cent of total world spice trading. Back in the middle of 1985 the city of New York price of a pound of black pepper was 60 cents. In mid-February dealers were having to pay more than \$22 a pound.

Consumers complain that the present price levels are far too high. Producers say that after years of low prices they are finally making money, and farmers are now able to make investments necessary to step up production.

Four countries are responsible for the bulk of world pepper production — Brazil, India, Indonesia and Malaysia. All four belong to the Jakarta-based International Pepper Community (IPC) which in mid-1985 decided on a minimum export price agreement.

But the agreement was never implemented. Prices suddenly surged as a succession of setbacks hit pepper production. Brazilian production was reduced by heavy rains in 1983 and by drought in 1984. In 1985 production in both Indonesia and Malaysia was hit by some of the heaviest rains in years. Total world production fell from its usual level of about 130,000 tonnes to around 90,000 tonnes.

The IPC's executive director, Mr. Abdul Gaffar Nasution, says it is unlikely that production will recover to its former levels for several years. Pepper vines take at least four years to mature and need a great deal of attention.

Indonesia exports two types of pepper — Lampung Black which is grown in southern and central Sumatra and Muntok White which is grown on the island of Bangka off the coast of East Sumatra. Bangka is also responsible for the bulk of Indonesia's tin production and with the continuing problems besetting the industry, some tin producers are turning to pepper as a means of survival.

The bulk of Indonesia's exports goes to the U.S. but at the moment it has no pepper available for export. The Indonesian pepper crop is harvested from July to September.

Brazil has its harvest in the last two months of the year, while India harvests in January and February and Malaysia in April and May. At present only India has any exportable surplus.

— Financial Times news feature.

Mubarak halts flyover which threatened churches

By Ashraf Fouad

Reuter

CAIRO — President Hosni Mubarak has given a small flippant to the Coptic Christian minority in mainly-Muslim Egypt by halting construction of a Cairo flyover which Christian clergy said would threaten ancient churches.

One of the churches which the clerics say was at risk is St. Sergius', built in the fifth century over a cave where tradition holds that Jesus and his mother Mary briefly lived when they fled to escape persecution by Herod, the Roman puppet king of Palestine.

Nearly 2,000 years later, the need for more road space in traffic-clogged Cairo encroached on St. Sergius', now part of a thriving tourist area, and the priests sounded alarm bells.

They filed lawsuits last December seeking to halt construction of the flyover, a road bridge on which thousands of cars and trucks would have rumbled daily close to the church.

Mubarak stepped in last month and Cairo city authorities announced he had approved a pedestrian bridge, instead of the overpass, to protect the churches.

"We didn't expect the president to interfere," said Maurice Sadek, a lawyer for the Coptic clergy. "That's two things he's done for us in 1985."

The first was Mubarak's order in January last year freeing Pope Shenouda, spiritual leader of the estimated six million Copts, who was stripped of his powers in 1981 and banished to a desert monastery by the late President Anwar Sadat.

Sadek told Reuters that Mub-

arak had called for formation of a committee to study damage so far and to oversee repairs.

The priests believe the president's intervention should at least prevent damage already caused to St. Sergius' and the cave during construction of the flyover's foundations from getting any worse.

"A main pillar holding up the church has shifted, making the roof tilt," said Father Ghobrial Gergis, priest of St. Sergius'. "The church could collapse."

He said the cave, already flooded with a few inches of water before construction began, was three-quarters inundated because the roadworks forced in artesian water.

Beneath the murky water, covered in a salty scum, an old altar where services were once conducted is visible.

Priests were also worried that a flyover would prevent tourist buses and fire-engines reaching the area, known as "old Cairo", which contains a run-down synagogue and a Coptic museum as well as a dozen old Christian churches.

Father Marcus Khalil of the "Hanging Church", which dates back to the early fourth century and is one of the world's oldest Christian places of worship, said a flyover would have been out of keeping with the area's character.

The "Hanging Church" is perched on the remains of a Roman fortress — four cylindrical towers, each 13 metres high — and is a site for pilgrims as well as tourists.

Mubarak inaugurated the refurbished Coptic museum two years ago after the government spent nearly half a million dollars on it.

Sadek told Reuters that Mub-

Bar girls worried by Cory's 'pain'

By Angus MacSwan

Reuter

MANILA — Manila's raucous red-light district didn't miss a beat in a week that saw a military revolt, a curfew and a dictator ousted. Now the bar girls are struggling their slim, brown shoulders at President Corason Aquino's offer to find them new jobs.

Cory Aquino has pledged to do all she can to discourage the prostitution which lures tourists to Ermita, a glossy, neon-lit strip of girls and beerhouses dubbed recently by Archbishop Jaime Sin as "the flashpoint of the world."

At her first press conference as president, Aquino said of the bar girls: "Being a woman this has really caused me great pain."

She added: "not only women but young boys and girls are also in this terrible trade so I am going to do my very best so that we will be able to provide jobs for our women... so they will not have to resort to this."

A "dancer" at the Blue Hawaii bar looked betrayed when given the news. "I voted for Cory. If I'd known he thought that I'd have voted for Marcos," she bellowed above the music as a line of girls in tiny bikini's walked on a stage behind the bar.

The girl, 17-year-old daughter of a black U.S. marine and a Filipina from the military town of Angeles, said her family thought she was at school in Manila.

"I can earn plenty of money and live with my friends. If I have another job I would like to be a flight hostess," she said.

Up the street — past the Firchouse, Bubbles, the Pussycat, bevy of prostitutes, transvestites, crippled beggars and ragged children — the view was the same. "I'll go to the Malacanang (pre-

sidential palace) myself and say 'Mrs. Aquino please don't close down the bars. No foreign tourists will come here if there's no girls,'"

She used to earn 50 pesos (\$2.5) a day as a shop girl. As a dancer she earns about the same, plus commission on any drinks a customer might buy her.

The big money comes if he chooses to pay her "bar fine" — 150 pesos (\$7.5) — to take her outside. After that it's private business.

"If the Philippines had any money, girls wouldn't have to do this," she said.

Many of the girls come from impoverished families in the provinces and send their earnings back home.

But in the past few years, as the Philippines' economic crisis has worsened, a number of girls are high school or university graduates who can't find the jobs they are qualified to do.

"After Makati (Manila's financial district), Ermita is the city's biggest money center," said one bar manager, a European. "Fifty per cent of the tourist trade is people coming for the bars and the girls."

"All the girls here voted for Cory. But how can they go back to earning 600 pesos a month?"

"Look at all the people who live off Ermita. There's five to six thousand girls. Most of them support families. There's the barmen, the cigarette boys, the flower sellers — and the owners. It would be

100,000 people."

Ermita — named after a 16th century hermit who retreated to the district when it was just a seaside village — emerged unscathed from the political turmoil of the past weeks.

A boycott of San Miguel beer called by Aquino to put pressure on Marcos to resign was ignored as most of the drinkers here are European, Japanese and Australian tourists and U.S. servicemen.

A curfew Marcos imposed one day before he fled was laughed off. Even when shooting erupted on the streets business continued as usual.

"During the trouble the tourists couldn't get out because the airport was closed. Where did they come? Ermita," the manager said.

Japanese children love to ride unicycles

TOKYO — Although Japan is famous for its automobiles, ask any group of elementary school pupils what's the best way to ride in style and they'll likely say one thing — unicycles.

Unicycles are no longer special vehicles confined to circus rings. More than half a million are in use in Japan. They are particularly popular with Japanese children.

The one-wheeled contraptions not only give children a thrill but also attract their adventurous minds.

According to the Japan Unicycle Association, they began their reign on the nation's school grounds about eight years ago, particularly at the elementary level. Some 3,500 elementary schools, about a fourth of all elementary schools in the country, are equipped with unicycles.

Kyuden Elementary School in Tokyo is equipped with 80 unicycles for 900 children. Two hun-

dred children have their own at home. They have proven to be confidence-builders says Hiroshi Kato, a teacher. "Children enjoy practising on them and encourage each other. Some children have become more active after they learned how to ride a unicycle."

It was eight years ago that the first unicycles appeared at the school. Says Kato: "There haven't been any big accidents except for the occasional scraped knee or elbow."

Totsuka Daini Elementary School is located in the centre of Tokyo. The school's playground is made of concrete. Teachers wanted to give their charges a chance to use their entire bodies and also get a sense of balance. The answer turned out to be 40 unicycles that were delivered to the school two years ago.

In less than a month, 50 children could ride them. Some of the

more skilled children can ride and bounce a ball at the same time. They can also play tag. A unicycle makes it possible for children to stop suddenly, change direction to either side and even run backwards. Sometimes they ride holding each other's shoulders side by side in a line.

Children get used to them so quickly that teachers can't really keep up. Even those children who hate gymnastics love riding unicycles, so at some schools they are utilised as one of the physical-education courses.

A unicycle costs from 5,000 yen to 20,000 yen (\$25 to \$100). There are 19 makers in Japan. A spokesman at Miyata Industry Co., the largest maker of unicycles, said there is an increase in production of about 10 per cent a year, and about 12,000 unicycles are produced every month — Asahi News Service, Tokyo.

Saving mother's through contraception

By Malcolm Potts

THE daily toll of maternal deaths does not make headlines. But the numbers involved are equivalent to a jumbo jet full of women crashing to earth every four or five hours, day in, day out. All are pregnant, have just given birth or have undergone an abortion. Some are still in their teens.

When poor and illiterate women die, it is a poignant tragedy for their families but in so many cases the tragedy is not even visible to the medical services.

Deaths in childbirth are highest where they are least well recorded. Yet accurate measurement of a public health problem is a prerequisite to effective action.

Between 1981 and 1983 Family Health International (FHI), an American research organisation, conducted population-based surveys of maternal deaths in the governorate of Menoufia in Egypt and on the island of Bali in Indonesia. Nearly 4,000 deaths from all causes were investigated.

The maternal mortality was estimated at 1.9 per 1,000 live births

in Menoufia and 7.2 per 1,000 in Bali. Relative to their population and taking into account the higher birth rates, Menoufia had 48 times and Bali 75 times as many maternal deaths as the United States. Twenty to 25 per cent of all deaths of women aged 15-49 in Indonesia and Egypt result from pregnancy and childbirth.

This compares with 1 per cent in Western countries, where reproductive mortality is curbed by a comprehensive system of antenatal care, medical help with practically every delivery, and the large-scale elimination of high-risk groups through the voluntary control of childbirth.

Haemorrhage and obstructed labour accounted for most of the deaths in the FHI studies. Training and provision of simple equipment to traditional birth attendants would help reduce the death rates. More funds can and must be invested to improve clinic and hospital facilities. But often the easiest and most achievable first step is to improve access to

contraception.

In Menoufia half the women who died in childbirth were over 30 and/or had three or more children. This fits the profile of women most likely to adopt contraception and underlines the importance of the message that in such areas community-based and private enterprise distribution of contraceptives can save lives.

When the local druggist sells a woman a packet of pills over the counter (in an area where maternal mortality is high) he may be more likely to save a human life than a specialist obstetrician in a developed country working to reduce an already low maternal mortality.

The studies in Egypt and Indonesia concentrated on areas where most deliveries are conducted by traditional birth attendants combined with a relatively high prevalence of contraception. In Bali, villages are often separated by mountainous roads from the only two large hospitals on the island. In the delta area of Egypt, transport is good and health ser-

vices more developed.

While the risks of childbirth for any individual pregnancy were considerably higher in Bali, the total number of women dying in relation to the population was only slightly higher. The reason was that with a lower birth rate the number of women at risk of death was relatively lower, especially for those over 30.

In some parts of the world many maternal deaths are caused by illegal abortions; in Bangladesh it accounts for one quarter of all maternal deaths. Contraception reduces the number of abortions and deaths from abortions, as has been demonstrated from the successful expansion of family planning services in Chile in the 1960s and 1970s.

Clearly, solutions to the carnage of maternal deaths do exist. Traditional birth attendants can be trained to screen high risk patients early in pregnancy; a little planning can improve transport; and immunising a woman against tetanus can help. Women's chances improve when they enter pre-

gnancy reasonably healthy and not weakened by, say, anaemia. The community must also play a role and the family must know that they should bring the women to medical services if labour is prolonged. Too many women arrive moribund and beyond help after hours or days of fruitless labour. Policy-makers may need to set new priorities.

The most important step to lowering maternal mortality is waking up to the problem and having the will and leadership within the community to take action.

Sri Lanka, for example, has a lower per capita income than Pakistan, yet its maternal mortality is less than in Pakistan because there is better use of family planning, more emphasis on antenatal care and a longer history of concern by the public health services — People News feature.

Dr. Potts is President of Family Health International, North Carolina, U.S.A.

Shuttle disaster leaves NASA image in tatters

By Robert Kearns

Reuter

WASHINGTON — NASA, which for decades seemed to run the U.S. space programme with flawless precision, has emerged from three days of hearings into the space shuttle disaster with its image in tatters.

Presidential commission chairman William Rogers called the agency's decision-making process "flawed" and said after listening to outcries of its chains of command that administrators had missed the forest for all the trees.

While they busied themselves controlling the bureaucracy governing the multi-billion dollar

space programme, Rogers told them they had forgotten to use "good judgment and common sense."

Engineers at Morton Thiokol, which built the rocket boosters for the shuttle Challenger, opposed its January 28 launch, fearing the abnormal cold posed a safety risk.

But their fears apparently remained locked in middle-level management. Top NASA officials testified they were never told about them.

The launch went ahead and the spacecraft exploded 75 seconds after takeoff, killing its seven astronauts and destroying the 1.5-billion-dollar shuttle.

Rogers was exasperated by the

acronym-laden world of the space programme — in which managers are classified as "level one" (top executives), "level two" (the deputy directors) and "level three" (the top of the middle-level managers).

But the jargon could not disguise what the commission saw as a key problem — safety fears at the end of the chain of command never reached the top, where the decision to launch is made at the Kennedy Space Centre "firing room."

Top "level two" NASA officials testified they were totally in the dark about the safety concerns.

Four key "level three" middle managers said they either dis-

agreed with Thiokol's safety concerns or were unaware that its engineers remained unanimously opposed to a launch even though the company's managers decided to go along with it.

The NASA officials involved in the launch decision at the Marshall Space Centre in Alabama, said they disagreed with the commission's conclusion. William Lucas, the centre's director, said he thought "it was a sound decision to launch."

However, his superiors, including former shuttle director Jesse Moore, testified that if they had known the depth of concern felt by Thiokol engineers, the shuttle would not have been lau-

nched.

"If this were an airplane and I just had a two-hour argument with Boeing about whether or not the wing was going to fall off or not, I think I would tell the pilot," said air force Major General Donald Kutyna, a commission member.

Even though the commission must still determine what caused the disaster, the prime suspect is failure — because of the cold — of synthetic rubber rings used to seal sections of the booster rockets.

Thiokol's engineers were concerned about the rings because they had not been tested at such low temperatures and were known to become less flexible when it was cold.

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Number 18

Your World This Week

2 spectators killed at opening of Portuguese rally

ESTORIL, Portugal (R) — The opening section of the Portuguese Motor Rally was cancelled Wednesday after two spectators were killed and about 30 injured when one of the cars skidded into the crowd at a sharp bend, officials said.

The rally was due to re-start later Wednesday from the Estoril autodrome near Lisbon. Officials said the 153 km opening section would be dropped and the contestants would begin the scheduled second section of the first stage.

A 36-year-old woman and her nine-year-old son were killed when the car driven by Portugal's Joaquim Santos skidded on a winding tarmac road in the Sintra area outside the Portuguese capital, plunging into spectators lining the route.

Officials said the spectators spilling onto the road had apparently caused Santos to lose control. He was unhurt.

The injured, some of whom were in a serious condition, were taken to hospitals in Cascais and Lisbon.

It was the worst accident ever recorded in the Portuguese rally. Wednesday's shortened opening stage is now due to finish in the northern town of Povo do Varzim early Thursday morning.

Santos was driving a Ford car and the Ford team announced it was withdrawing from the rally. The team issued a communique calling for tighter security to keep spectators at a safe distance from the rally route.

Canada's McKoy sets world record

KOBE, Japan (AP) — Canada's Mark McKoy set a world indoor record for the men's 50-metre hurdle Wednesday with the time of 6.25 seconds. He broke the previous record of 6.35 seconds set by Greg Foster of the United States in 1985. McKoy's record came during the preliminary at the 1986 international indoor track and field Kobe meet in western Japan. He placed fourth in the 110-metre hurdle at the Los Angeles Olympics.

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Schumacher named for W. German squad

FRANKFURT, West Germany (R) — West German team manager Franz Beckenbauer named suspended goalkeeper Harald "Toni" Schumacher Wednesday in his 20-man squad for next Wednesday's international soccer friendly against Brazil.

Schumacher was dealt a domestic four-match suspension last week which would rule him out of the Brazil clash if he loses an appeal against the decision on Thursday.

Beckenbauer named Eike Immel of Borussia Dortmund and Uli Stein of Hamburg as his reserve goalkeepers for the Frankfurt match, which is part of West Germany's warm-up campaign for the World Cup finals in Mexico.

Schumacher's absence would be a blow to Beckenbauer's World Cup hopes, which have already been set back by doubts about injured striker Rudi Voeller and apparently vain efforts to coax Bernd Schuster of Barcelona back into the side.

Coetzee signals retirement

LONDON (R) — Former world heavyweight boxing champion Gerrie Coetzee of South Africa said Wednesday he did not think he would carry on fighting. Coetzee was speaking just over 12 hours after he had been knocked out in the first round of his fight with Britain's Frank Bruno. Coetzee, who survived only 110 seconds of a bout billed as a final eliminator for American Tim Witherspoon's World Boxing Association title, said: "I'm just very depressed with the way the fight finished so quickly and I feel ashamed today. 'As for my future, I don't think I will carry on fighting. The smart fighter knows when to retire and if I carry on now I will only become a stepping stone for younger men.'"

Coetzee, 30, added: "Bruno is an excellent fighter. I've been boxing for 20 years and no-one has done what Frank did to me last night."

Algeria and Morocco test their World Cup skills

By Jean-Louis Pierrat
AP sports writer

CAIRO, Egypt — Algeria and Morocco, the two African representatives at this summer's World Cup soccer finals, test their skills against the rest of that continent's top teams over the next two weeks as they try to capture the 15th African Nations Cup beginning on Friday.

Jose Faria, the Brazilian coach of Morocco, and Rabah Saadane, his Algerian counterpart, both say that victory in the March 7-21 tournament will give their players a high degree of confidence for the much

coveted World Cup, beginning May 31 in Mexico.

Despite the risk of injuries, Algeria, which has never conquered the African nations crown, and Morocco, winner in 1976, have called up most of their top players for the tournament, being contested in Cairo and Alexandria.

There are one or two notable absences. The French club of Mulhouse, for example, refused to release Algerian striker Salah Assad, a member of the side that beat mighty West Germany 2-1 in a stunning upset during the last World Cup in Spain.

Delighted Robson builds bridges

MONTERREY, Mexico (R) — England soccer manager Bobby Robson made his peace in Mexico Tuesday night.

Robson told reporters he was "delighted about everything" in Monterrey — the venue of England's first phase World Cup matches.

After December's draw for the finals, Robson had said Monterrey was the city he least liked because it was hotter and lower than the other sites.

The remark wounded local sensibilities with newspapers reminding readers about England's "animal" supporters and asking how the English players could expect the support of local fans.

But Robson, in Mexico to check on facilities for his team, also used the visit to do some bridge-building.

He told reporters he and his party were looking forward to returning on May 25, six days before the tournament starts.

"We have nothing to complain about," he said. "We have had nothing but a great deal of friendship and hospitality and kindness."

And referring to Monterrey's soccer team clinching the Mexican

championship on Saturday for the first time in 40 years Robson said: "Last Saturday must have been the best football experience you have ever had."

"Now we just hope you can come and play good football for you and be your team in the World Cup."

In Mexico, as everywhere else in the world, English football cannot yet divorce itself from the memory of the rioting at the Heysel Stadium in Brussels which resulted in 39 deaths.

Robson said he expected between 3,000 and 5,000 English fans in Monterrey in June.

The general hope among British diplomats is that the £2,000 (\$2,900) plus cost of a package trip to Mexico will price the hooligans out of the market.

But the diplomats have had to imagine the unthinkable worst and extra consulate officials are being drafted in from London.

Diplomatic sources said Mexican and British officials were examining ways of keeping known trouble-makers out and discussing whether fans should be segregated — an unnecessary precaution in Mexico, usually.

U.S. NBA roundup

NEW YORK (AP) — The Atlanta Hawks' Formula for success came for Dominique Wilkins to play the superstar role and everyone else to give him assistance.

This season's surprise team in the National Basketball Association (NBA) pulled within three games of Philadelphia in the eastern conference standings as Wilkins scored 32 points and Glenn Rivers set a team record with 21 assists Tuesday night in a 128-121 victory over the 76ers.

The Hawks also got a big supporting performance from guard Randy Wittman, who was 12-for-15 from the field and scored 24 points, and Kevin Willis, who had 20 points.

Elsewhere in the NBA, it was New York 119, Washington 83; Detroit 120, New Jersey 103; Boston 106, Chicago 94; Denver 123, Houston 115; Los Angeles Clippers 106, Cleveland 101; Golden State 129, San Antonio 126 in overtime; Sacramento 94, Utah 92; Portland 102, Indiana 99.

Philadelphia coach Matt Guokas and forward Julius Erving are impressed with the Hawks, who are 3-0 against the 76ers this season and meet them again in Philadelphia Wednesday night.

"The Hawks show potential to go farther," Erving said. "They have a superstar player in Dominique as the cornerstone and a lot of big guys to do the dirty work."

Moses Malone scored 35 points for the 76ers and Charles Barkley added 24 points and 16 rebounds after going scoreless in the first quarter.

Kevin McHale scored 23 points as Boston won its sixth straight game by outscoring Chicago 29-16 in the third quarter.

The Bulls, who were led by Charles Oakley with 22 points, trailed by 13 points in the second quarter, but battled back to tie it 52-52 at halftime.

Nuggets 128, Rockets 115.

Denver pulled within one game of first-place Houston in the midwest division as Alex English scored 25 points and Bill Handley and Calvin Natt 21 each.

Sampson led the Rockets with 26 points and 12 rebounds.

Pistons 120, Nets 103.

Board XI makes slow reply to Pakistanis

GALLE, Sri Lanka (R) — The Sri Lanka Board President's XI made a slow start to their innings on the second day of their three-day cricket match against the touring Pakistanis on Wednesday.

At the close, the Board XI, replying to the tourists' first innings total of 285 for eight declared, had crawled to 52 for one in 32 overs with captain Sumithra Warnakulasuriya on 39 not out.

Earlier, Saleem Malik, leading Pakistan in the absence of five seniors, slammed three sixes and seven fours in an aggressive 106 as Pakistan overcame a hesitant morning session.

Overnight pair Rameez Raja and Qasim Omar added just eight to their overnight 115 for two when Raja was caught by Roshan Mahanama at cover off spinner Don Anurasiri for 58.

Qasim and Saleem Yousaf added 44 together before Qasim was caught by Warnakulasuriya off Anurasiri for a patient 62.

After lunch, Wasim Akram and Zakir Khan were both out cheaply but Saleem, batting steadily, found a useful partner in Tauseef and the pair added 59 runs for the eighth wicket before Saleem was out shortly before tea.

Anurasiri finished with three wickets for 72 off 37 overs.

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CONVERSION OF EXISTING CONFERENCE HALL INTO THEATRE

The Ministry of Youth invites qualified specialist international contractors jointly with qualified local contractors to submit their technical and financial offers for the conversion works of the existing conference hall of the Royal Cultural Centre into a theatre, in compliance with the conditions and requirements of the Ministry.

Documents can be obtained from the RCC on the 8th March, till the 15th of March, 1986.

Offers should be submitted to the RCC at a date not later than 12 noon, Saturday the 3rd May, 1986.

Minister of Youth.

P.S. Advertising fees will be the responsibility of the successful tenderer.

General Director

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CENTRAL TENDERS No. 34, 35, 36/86

Construction of the Secondary Schools/ The Sixth Education Project.

The contractors who had been qualified previously for the Sixth Education Project and willing to participate in the following bids are requested to get bid documents from the project directorate, Ministry of Education from 1/3/1986 with the following conditions:

1. The Sixth Education Project is partially financed by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and the Islamic Bank for Development, the Secondary Schools are divided into two groups and these tenders constitute the first group.

2. Description of the announced tenders:- It includes the construction of the Secondary Schools at the following sites:-

No. 34/86 South Marka, Awajan, with an approximate area of 11342 m².
No. 35/86 Thanieh (Karak), Mutah (Karak) with an approximate area of 7940 m².
No. 36/86 Tafilah, Wadi Mousa, Al-Hasa with an approximate area of 13611 m².

3. Prices of the documents and tender bond for each tender as follows:

Price Tender Bond

JD 250 JD 25,000

4. Last date for receiving copy of tender is Saturday 12.4.1986.

5. Last date for submission offers is 12 O'clock Saturday 19.4.1986 at the Department of Government Directorate.

Chairman of the Central Tenders Committee
Director of the Government Tendering Directorate

ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE WATER AUTHORITY OF JORDAN INVITATION FOR BIDS (IFB)

Date: 06/03/1986
Loan No. Zarga-Ruseifa
IFB No. 20/86/ME

1. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has received a loan from Kreditanstalt fuer Wiederaufbau in Deutsche Marks towards the Zarga-Ruseifa Water and Sewerage Project and it is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract (s) for which this IFB has been issued.

2. The Water Authority now invites sealed bids from bidders in the Federal Republic of Germany and the Land Berlin (eligible bidders) for the supply of operation and maintenance equipment as follows:

15 Welding Machines, 10 Jet Guileys, 10 Wheeled Backhoes, 4 Wheeled Loaders, 15 Air Compressors.

3. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from, and inspect the bidding documents at, the office of the President, Water Authority, Nabulus Street, Jabal Hussein, P.O. Box 2412 Amman, Jordan, Tel. 866111, Tlx. 22439 WAJ JO.

4. A complete set of the tender documents may be purchased by any interested eligible bidder on the submission of a written application to the above and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of JD 200.

5. All bids must be accompanied by a security of 5% of the total bid amount and must be delivered to the above office on or before 1200 hours, Jordan local time, on April 30th, 1986.

Eng. M.S. Kilani
President
Water Authority

MOVIES

Cinema CONCORD

Tel: 677420

DOIN TIME

(Colour)

Performances: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema RAINBOW

Tel: 625155

MR. MOM

(Colour)

Performances: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:30

Cine-Theatre Philadelphia

Tel: 634144 - 634149

THE PRIZE OF PERIL

(Colour)

Performances: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:15

Cinema RAGHADAN

Tel: 622198

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

(Arabic) (Colour)

Performances: 12:00, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30

Cinema OPERA

Tel: 675573

STRIBES

(Colour)

Performances: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:30

Developing countries seek broader talks on international monetary reform

BUENOS AIRES (R) — The Group of 24 (G-24) developing nations, which is currently meeting here, wants to widen discussion on international monetary reform this year to deal with debt and capital flows, monetary officials said Tuesday.

At the same time, they added, the G-24 is pressing to broaden the forum for monetary reform talks from the interim committee of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which is due to meet in Washington next April.

"The developing nations want this reviewed by the development committee of the World Bank and ultimately to hold an international conference within the framework of the United Nations," Mr. Eduardo Zaldendo of Argentina said.

Mr. Zaldendo, who chairs a preparatory meeting which began Monday, said monetary reform must reflect development issues and the capital needs of Third World nations.

According to the officials, a G-24 report on monetary reform is currently being studied by the IMF board in parallel with a study

compiled last June by the Group of 10 (G-10) industrial nations, which is also meeting ahead of the interim committee.

"While the two groups are dealing with basically the same issues, the G-10 does not cover developmental issues or capital transfers, without which no discussion of international reform is meaningful," World Bank alternate executive director, Mr. Felix Camarasa, said.

Mr. Camarasa also said the G-10 had not given priority to the question of Third World debt in its report, and that the G-24 meeting in Buenos Aires had accordingly been called in part to trigger debate on this issue within the context of world monetary reform.

However, the officials said the G-24 meeting was unlikely to make any tough statements on the Third World's \$800 billion foreign debt in view of the differing characteristics of Latin American, African and Asian debt.

"Latin America has a large amount of debt owed to private banks while African countries are large beneficiaries of concessional loans and aid," one

said. While the meeting is expected to call for new approaches to the debt problem it is unlikely to go as far as the 11-nation Cartagena Group of Latin American debtors, which is backing countries that unilaterally reduce debt payments.

The G-24 report last year called for corresponsibility of debtors and creditors, lower interest rates and increased global liquidity to tide over balance of payments problems in debt-ridden countries.

The officials said that among the proposals tabled at this meeting are for a substantial issue of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs), which up till now has met little enthusiasm in the industrial nations.

While the officials acknowledged its proposals for a greater World Bank role in leading to

debtor countries have been in part recognised with the U.S.-sponsored Baker plan, several countries remain concerned about conditionality.

In particular, they want to avoid cross-conditionality between World Bank and IMF lending, and thereby maintain the bank's role in long-term development assistance on concessional terms.

U.S. Treasury Secretary James Baker has proposed that banks and international lending agencies lead \$29 billion to developing countries in the next three years if they agree to implement growth economic policies.

The preparatory meeting continues through Thursday when ministers of finance and economy gather for a one-day meeting to finalise the G-24 position for the April meeting in Washington.

Cocoa producers, consumers disagree on pricing formula

GENEVA (R) — Talks between the world's leading cocoa producers and consumers aimed at working out a new price support system for the commodity were adjourned Wednesday until July, delegates said.

Hopes of reaching a price support pact to replace the one due to expire in September were effectively scuppered last week when the Ivory Coast, the world's biggest cocoa producer, told the meeting it would remain outside any such agreement.

Consuming countries then declared that they would not agree to a pact containing economic conditions unless the Ivory Coast took part.

The talks, held under the auspices of the United Nations Con-

ference on Trade and Development, have failed to end a price stalemate between consumers and producers.

Consumers want a price support system to start operating at a middle point of 100 cents a pound while the growers, desperate for higher prices to increase income, seek a 120-cent level.

If no price support system is agreed, the current pact is likely to be replaced with a purely administrative accord which will have no powers to enforce price movements for cocoa on world markets.

Wednesday's inconclusive talks helped depress cocoa prices on the London futures market. Cocoa for May delivery lost \$39 (\$57) a tonne to \$1,518 (\$2,370).

Canada's major oil provinces face 'unprecedented collapse'

MONTREAL (OPECNA) — Canada's major oil producing provinces could suffer an unprecedented economic collapse if world oil prices continue to decline, according to industry analysts here.

"They also warned that Canada's energy industry and the country's financial stability could be severely affected."

Canada, although an oil exporter and one of the United States' main crude suppliers, has imported crude from the Middle East and other sources.

The Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) reports that the country is heavily involved in offshore oil development projects, has a drilling programme in the Beaufort Sea in the North Pole region and is continually developing technology to improve efforts to extract oil from bituminous sands.

All these efforts are in danger as oil prices decline, the analysts state.

"Frontier exploration off Canada will probably, to a large extent, become history for three to five years at least," said Mr. James Hamilton, an industry analyst

based in the city of Calgary, a major centre in the oil-rich province of Alberta.

Dome Petroleum, a huge oil company with a troubled financial history, is one of several firms facing severe problems ahead.

The company's present value of \$4 billion could be pared down by over \$700 million if the oil price declines to \$15 a barrel.

KUNA reports Energy Secretary Patricia Carney as saying that Canada is "keeping quite cool until we see whether this is a controlled parachute jump or a free-fall in prices."

Meanwhile, banks which have lent a high percentage of their assets to the oil industry are becoming increasingly worried.

The Royal Bank of Canada is said to have lent \$1.5 billion to Canadian energy and mining companies which are now experiencing problems.

Internationally, both the Royal Bank of Canada and the Bank of Montreal are facing trouble with their heavy outstanding loans to oil producers Venezuela and Mexico, which depend on oil exports to stabilise their economies.

Gulf Arab oil ministers to meet on Saturday to coordinate moves

ABU DHABI (Agencies) — Oil ministers of the six member states in the Gulf Cooperation Council will hold an emergency meeting Saturday to discuss the sharp fall of oil prices, the United Arab Emirates official news agency WAM said Wednesday.

The meeting will comprise oil ministers of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The six ministers will discuss "the recent development in the oil market and coordinate the member states' future oil policy," WAM said.

The meeting is part of the contacts and consultations made by the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) member states and with non-OPEC oil producers, for joint cooperation to regain stability in the oil market.

The contacts aim at defining an acceptable share of the market for the 13-nation cartel to help prop up deteriorating prices on the world market.

Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait and Qatar are members of OPEC. OPEC is also scheduled to hold an extraordinary meeting in Geneva March 16. The meeting is expected to be expanded later to include oil ministers of non-OPEC countries.

In Kuwait, an unidentified oil official was meanwhile quoted as expressing belief that the unprecedented drop in the price of North Sea oil might help reverse the worldwide downward trend.

The official was commenting on the reports that Britain's Brent oil had dropped a day earlier to \$11.86 a barrel, down 64 cents from Monday and the lowest since the non-OPEC European country first pumped oil from the North Sea in 1975.

The Qatar News Agency quoted the official in the Kuwait Petroleum Corporation as saying "this can serve the status of OPEC, and can help contract the period of low prices and start sending them upward again."

The official predicted that the situation on the world oil market would start improving by the end of the current year.

Soviet Union may import cheap oil

Meanwhile, a senior Soviet

economist said Tuesday that the Soviet Union, the world's biggest oil producer, will cut the growth rate of its oil output because of low world prices and may even import crude.

Mr. Stanislav Schatalin, a member of the Academy of Sciences and head of an economic committee at the State Planning Office, told a press conference in Vienna that low oil prices were "very negative" for the Soviet Union at a time of rising production costs.

"Under these conditions we think it would be unprofitable to keep the rate of growth of oil production at the present level... we will cut down the rate of growth of oil production," he said.

One Western diplomat in Moscow has estimated that the Soviet Union loses \$550 million in annual foreign exchange earnings every time the price falls by \$1.

Mr. Schatalin said the Soviet Union would not "miss this chance" of buying cheap oil if hard currency were available to do so and if such purchases made economic sense.

Whether the country imported oil or not would depend on the relative costs of exports and Soviet oil production.

"We would need hard currency in any case," he said, while noting

that the Soviet Union was taking measures to boost hard currency earnings by sales of manufactured goods to the West.

Mr. Schatalin said at one point that the Soviet Union intended to maintain the volume of its oil exports to the West and East, although he later said: "I would say it would be impossible to keep up the current level of exports."

He noted: "We did not fulfil the plan of oil production in the (1981-1985) five-year plan and we fell short quite considerably."

Kremlin chief, Mr. Mikhail Gorbachev, has criticised the poor record of the Soviet oil industry as part of his drive to inject new life into the country's economy.

But Mr. Schatalin said the Soviet Union would be producing an annual 700 million tonnes of oil by the year 2000, a figure that compares with production of 613 million tonnes in 1984.

This would be sufficient for home consumption and exports, he said without elaborating.

Asked if the Soviet Union might cut its oil exports in order to help OPEC support prices, Mr. Schatalin said he would be "improvising" if he attempted to answer the question.

France gains from lower dollar, oil prices

PARIS — The unexpected bonanza of falling oil prices and the decline in the dollar means that this is likely to be the best year for the French economy since at least 1979.

France, with virtually no energy resources of its own, was one of the industrialised countries worst hit by the two oil shocks. By the same token, it is one of the first to gain from the downward slide in both oil prices and the dollar.

The government, private economic institutes and industry are thus all revising their forecasts on the basis of a more optimistic outlook for inflation, the balance of payments and economic growth. The major question mark remains over growth.

Prime Minister Laurent Fabius has said that real Gross National Product (GNP) could rise this year by 2.5-3 per cent, compared with the 1.8 per cent included in the 1986 budget estimates.

Mr. Jacques Plassard, the head of the private forecasting institute Ipecode, believes that 2.5 per cent is "credible."

The major note of caution over growth comes from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development which is assessing the deflationary consequences for industrialised countries of the potentially sharp drop in imports from oil-producing nations.

As France has been one of the major exporters of capital goods and armaments to the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) group, French industry will be among the worst hit.

At the same time, French exports — and hence growth — will suffer from the greater difficulty that European manufacturers will

have in competing in the U.S. and dollar-denominated areas.

Reflecting this more negative side of the picture, Peugeot, the privately-owned motor group, expects to see a fall in sales to the U.S. as well as to Iran and Nigeria.

But in policy terms, the overall brighter economic outlook will provide much more elbow room for whatever government takes office after March's parliamentary elections.

Until recently, the opposition feared that it would come to power at a time when economic activity was slowing down and when its programme of deregulation and tax cuts risked triggering off a further rise in inflation and a widening of the trade deficit.

A successor government is now likely to be in a more comfortable position, with more room to manoeuvre over exchange rate policy, the budget deficit and wage settlements.

All this means, as President Francois Mitterrand wryly commented recently, that the Socialists could have done with another six months before facing the electorate to reap the fruits of both their own anti-inflationary policies and of a far more favourable external environment.

Mr. Jacques Bourgeois, director of economic studies at the Bipe, one of the leading private forecasting institutes, speaks of the impact of recent events on the French economy as "an oil shock in reverse."

In December the average cost of French imports of oil was still \$28 a barrel with the dollar being traded at an average exchange rate of FF7.70 (FF8.99 for 1985 as a whole). The barrel has now

sunk below \$20 and the dollar slipped to about FF7.40.

The 1986 budget was built on the assumption of a barrel of oil at \$26 and an exchange rate of FF9 to the dollar. The government is revising its calculations on the basis of an oil price of \$21 and an exchange rate of FF7.50.

The most immediate savings are in France's trade account where a potential oil bill this year of about FF180 billion will be cut by FF60 billion.

Some of that gain will be lost through a lower-than-anticipated level of exports and through higher economic growth sucking in more imports. But government officials expect that the net gain to the trade account will be about FF40-50 billion.

Thus the Bipe, which had expected a further trade deficit this year of FF9 billion after the FF24 billion deficit in both 1984 and 1985, now anticipates a trade surplus of between FF30-40 billion this year, with a current account surplus of around FF50 billion.

France has now been in such a comfortable external position in more than a decade. It is all the more welcome in that the sharp cut in the French oil bill coincides with a worsening of the trade balance in manufactured goods, reflecting a loss of competitiveness by French industry and which would have put a brake on any attempts by the conservatives to run a higher growth rate after March.

The second immediate effect will be to reduce the French inflation rate by a further percentage point, largely because of the weighting given to oil in the price index.

Both Bipe and Ipecode believe

that French inflation could decline to three per cent or less by the end of the year — even if they do not share Mr. Fabius' optimism it could come down to a rate of two per cent.

More difficult to calculate is the impact on the growth rate. The further decline in inflation should leave wage earners with a windfall gain in purchasing power as wage settlements this year are averaging an increase of three to four per cent.

This will boost internal demand and activity. At the same time, industry will gain from the cut in energy prices and the cost of imported raw materials.

Against this, some growth will be drained off by the loss of export sales to OPEC countries and the dollar area. But a growth rate of 2.5 per cent would still be the best France has achieved since 1979.

French companies, which were already beginning to take a rosier picture of prospects for sales and profitability, are now in an even more buoyant mood.

Mr. Albert Merlin, head of the economic unit at Saint Gobain, the glass, pipes and engineering group, calls the fall in the oil price and the dollar "an excellent affair."

He says that it will help cut costs in a way that will give "a little push to investment, which we need."

But he gives a warning that the high indebtedness of French companies will continue to be a drag on investment for some years.

The Bipe believes that the improvement in the current account surplus could postpone the need for a devaluation after March. It also thinks that a new government will no longer be forced into raising social security contributions.

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midday on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

One sterling	1.4665/75	U.S. dollars
One U.S. dollar	1.4160/70	Canadian dollars
	2.2195/2205	West German marks
	2.5070/85	Dutch guilders
	1.8865/75	Swiss francs
	45.43/48	Belgian francs
	6.8250/8300	French francs
	1509/1510	Italian lire
	179.40/50	Japanese yen
	7.1680/1730	Swedish crowns
	7.0210/60	Norwegian crowns
	8.2050/2100	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	343.50/344.00	U.S. dollars

YOUR DAILY Horoscope

from the Carroll Righter Institute

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 1986

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Get into the various separate ideas of business and other practical ideas and activities and wait until a more propitious day before you go after your big goals.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) Your intuitive perceptions should be well combined with your good judgment so that you can make daily routines profitable.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 20) A trip may be necessary in order to tie up some new deal in which you have an interest, so don't delay this.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) Look to an expert organizer for help in getting your worldly affairs in fine order. A bigwig can be of assistance.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to Jul. 21) Deal with your associates in a more businesslike fashion and get better results with them.

LEO (Jul. 22 to Aug. 21) Garner further information with regard to activities in which you are now engaged. Avoid heavy traffic while driving today.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sept. 22) Be with a cheerful friend if you want to have a good time and go to the right places for recreation.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Try to please all who dwell under your roof and show that you are devoted to them. Buy some new appliances for your home.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Get into the same pleasures that your partners like and you are appreciated more. Answer all letters.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) You have a chance to garner more of the fine things of life today, so get busy and do so. Be enthusiastic.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) Those who understand your ambitions can now give you the boost you need in such directions.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) Sit down and figure out how far you have gotten towards reaching your goals. One who admires you gives fine suggestions.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) Try to decide which of your friends like you for yourself and those who are merely using you for their gain.

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, MARCH 7, 1986

GENERAL TENDENCIES: This is a very good day to make whatever changes may be necessary in order that you gain progress in deciding upon just what your long-range plans are.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) Seek out older individuals whose ideas are different from yours and can do something worthwhile for you.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 20) You are inspired how to have a more abundant life, so plan it now and put your best ideas to work quickly.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) A dynamic partner can do something nice for you now since you have rendered a favor in the past, so accept readily.

LEO (Jul. 22 to Aug. 21) Be happy with the one you have been romancing for some time and show that you are devoted to him or her.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sept. 22) You have work to do at home and should complete it before evening and then be satisfied with what you have accomplished.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) Early make appointments and keep them on time and get good results thereby. Take time to see close friends.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) A project you had put aside can now be picked up again and made profitable at this time. Become more economical.

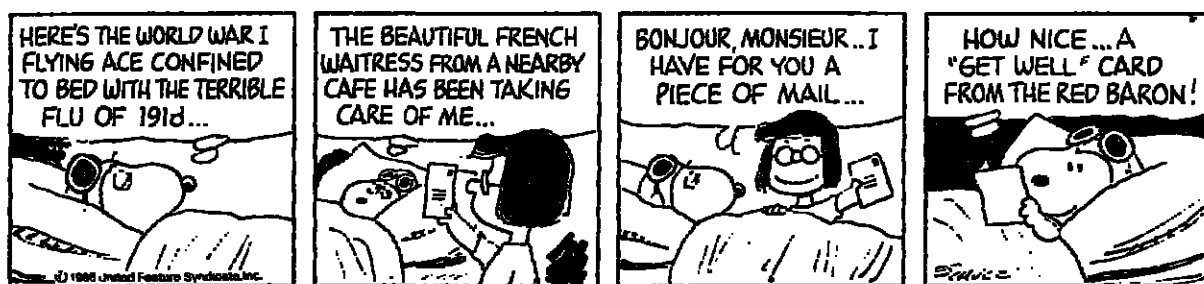
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Pursue that goal you had put aside and reach it successfully now to make your life easier. Socialize this evening.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) By added application, you can now rid yourself of some situation that is very limiting. Channel your energies.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) Although a friend usually takes too much of your time, listen carefully to suggestions given you. They can be helpful.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) Gain more prestige by handling some public duty well and higher-ups will be appreciative. Avoid overexpending on recreation.

Peanuts



Mutt 'n' Jeff

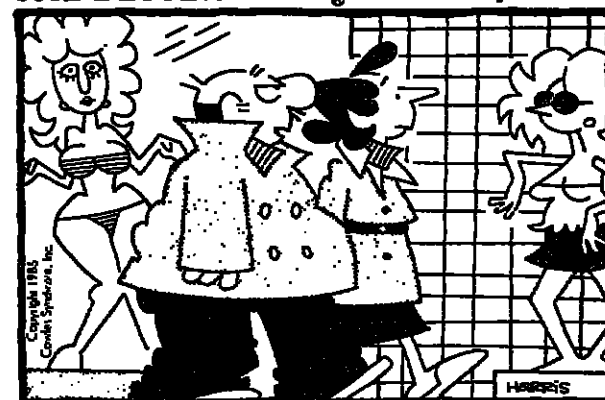


Andy Capp



THE BETTER HALF.

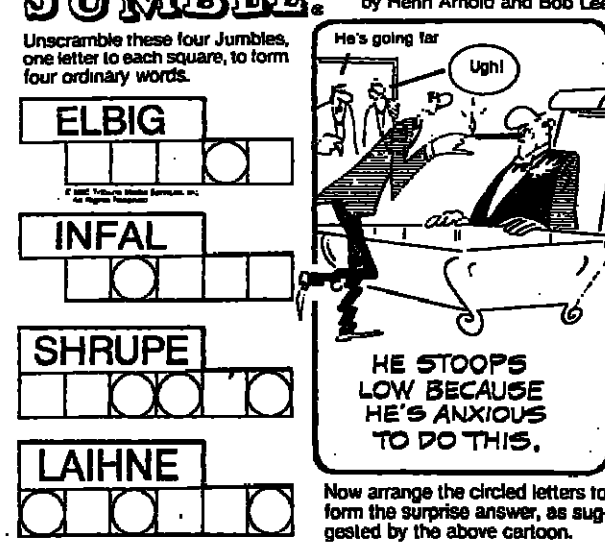
By Harris



"Winter must be coming, the stores have all their new summer clothes in."

JUMBLE.

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henry Arnold and Bob Lee



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Print answer here:

Yesterday's Jumble: BATHE POKER QUORUM STUCCO

Answer: What a duck hunter might be—A "QUACK" SHOT

Aquino meets with freed Communist rebel leaders

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — Two alleged leaders of the Communist insurgency and two purported members of an assassination team that fought the Ferdinand Marcos government were freed from prison Wednesday.

Three of them then met with President Corason Aquino, who apologized for the delay in their release, Presidential Spokesman Rene Saguisag said.

Mrs. Aquino has promised to free all political prisoners when she took over last week after Marcos fled into exile.

The men released Wednesday included Jose Maria Sison, the alleged founder and chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines, and Bernabe Buscayno, alias Commander Dante, alleged former chief of the guerrilla New People's Army.

The others were Ruben Alegre and Alexander Bironde, both described as alleged members of the rebel assassination team.

The decision to free the four rebels came over the objections of Mrs. Aquino's top military advisers.

Jovito Salonga, who heads a presidential panel on good government, signed the release order following a meeting attended by Defence Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Gen. Fidel Ramos, the armed forces chief of staff.

Saguisag described the meeting as "a candid, cordial and vigorous exchange of views."

Saguisag said Mr. Enrile and Gen. Ramos "said the release of all detainees could reinforce the insurgency, that the military might lose its initiative because what's the point in capturing (rebels) if they would be released later."

Buscayno was arrested in August 1976. Sison in November 1977 and the others in the past two years.

Saguisag said Sison was released to the custody of attorney Joker Arroyo. Mrs. Aquino's executive secretary and Buscayno to the custody of Dona Aurora Aquino, her mother-in-law.

He said Alegre and Bironde were being released into the custody of national assemblyman Augusto Sanchez.

The only condition of their release was that they not "return to the hills" to fight the government.

"We are saying that all of them went to the hills because they were all opposed to Marcos," Saguisag said.

Saguisag said releasing them into the custody of specific individuals was a way to encourage them to comply with the sole condition of their release.

"At least in a moral sense we believe that that will also make it harder for those concerned not to comply," he said.

Saguisag also said the new government was "receiving feelers for dialogue" with the insurgency and had formed a committee to study the matter.

Between 400 and 500 other political prisoners have already been cleared for release by the new government. It was not known how many of these have actually been freed so far.

Saguisag said the status of bet-

ween 100 and 200 others people convicted of common crimes but listed by human rights organizations as political detainees was also discussed at the meeting.

Earlier in the day, Mrs. Aquino paid her first visit as president to Malacanang Palace, the opulent executive mansion that Marcos abandoned last week when he fled into exile.

"It looks like a hotel," Mrs. Aquino said as she climbed the stairs of the white, two-storey residence.

Except for an Associated Press photographer, journalists were barred from the three-hour tour that took Mrs. Aquino and a party of cabinet members and aides into the living quarters of the Spanish-colonial palace on Manila's Pasig River.

At one point she waved from an upstairs window at tourists wandering about the palace grounds, which were closed to the public during Marcos' 20-year rule.

Meanwhile, the chairman of a U.S. House Subcommittee on Asia was preparing to meet with the new president and tell her the United States should help her government recover assets Marcos drained from the Philippines.

Representative Stephen Solarz, who arrived late Tuesday, also said he had a message from House Speaker Thomas "Tip" O'Neill, who reportedly plans to invite Mrs. Aquino to address the U.S. Congress.

Mrs. Aquino has said she plans to use Malacanang as an office but would not live there because such luxurious surroundings are inappropriate for the leader of an impoverished nation.

Opponents believe Botha's decision is an empty gesture

CAPE TOWN (R) — President P.W. Botha's decision to lift emergency rule in South Africa was given only a cautious welcome Wednesday by government critics, who fear it may be an empty gesture.

Left-wing and right-wing opponents of the ruling National Party said there was no evidence to support Mr. Botha's assertion Tuesday that anti-government protests in black townships were decreasing.

"It can be seen that the lifting of the emergency has little to do with changes in the security situation but is primarily designed to achieve a diplomatic objective," said the liberal Cape Times in an editorial Wednesday, accusing Mr. Botha of making cosmetic announcements to please world opinion.

"The great danger is that President Botha may now seek to legislate to entrench more sweeping security powers in the permanent law of the land," it said.

"In his remarks yesterday the president hinted that this might be his intention. If so, the lifting of the emergency is an empty gesture."

Promising to lift the emergency in a speech to parliament, Mr. Botha also said his government would propose new legislation to maintain law and order, a suggestion that caused dismay among civil rights groups.

"Mr. Botha's suggestion that he needs to increase the already too-sweeping powers of the state falls with apprehension," said the Detainees' Parents Support Committee, a group that monitors detention without trial.

Politicians to the left of the government urged it to release all detainees — not just those held under the emergency — and to withdraw troops from black townships, to abolish apartheid and to lift bans on organisations such as the African National Congress guerrilla group.

Government supporters urged blacks who had called for an end to the emergency to abandon violence and negotiate. "The onus is now on those people and groups to show that they were right," a state radio commentary said Wednesday.

The extreme right-wing white Conservative Party criticised the lifting of the emergency, referring to continued violence and guerrilla operations.

"By lifting the state of emergency, the state president is creating the false impression that the security position in the country has improved, while the revolutionary are in fact busy sharpening their onslaught," said party spokesman Louis Theunissen.

Meanwhile a black woman was killed when a hand grenade was hurled into a house and two black men died in separate incidents as violence continued overnight in South Africa, police said.

The renewed violence came only hours after Mr. Botha said the unrest in the country had calmed sufficiently for the state of emergency to be lifted, probably on Friday.

A police spokesman said the grenade was thrown into a house in Ateridgeville township near Pretoria killing the woman and injuring two men.

He said that one man was killed and four others injured when police used shotguns to disperse a crowd after vehicles were petrol-bombed at Kanana, near Orkney in the western Transvaal.

Lomeiko: Palme was killed for his political beliefs

MOSCOW (R) — A Soviet Foreign Ministry spokesman said Wednesday that Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme was killed for his political views, especially his firm stand on disarmament.

Vladimir Lomeiko, writing in the weekly Literaturnaya Gazeta (literary gazette), called Mr. Palme one of the West's foremost statesmen and a man of new political ideas.

He said future generations would compare Palme, assassinated last Friday night in Stockholm by an unidentified gunman, with Indian leader Indira Gandhi and U.S. civil rights campaigner Martin Luther King.

Mr. Lomeiko said Mr. Palme had welcomed Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's latest arms proposals and was firmly committed to ridding the world of nuclear arms.

"They killed Palme because they feared the strength of his example. He was shot for his dream of a world without arms, of trust between peoples," Mr. Lomeiko wrote.

Immediately after Mr. Palme's death, the Soviet media began publishing articles hinting there was a CIA connection in Mr. Palme's death.

The murder of Mr. Palme last Friday bore a striking resemblance to the country's last major political assassination, that of King Gustav III in 1792, a Swedish writer said Tuesday.

"There are many uncanny similarities," TV producer Olle Hager, co-author of a study of the king's murder, told reporters.

Both men were shot just before 11.30 on a Friday night with special bullets intended to cause the greatest possible injury.

King Gustav was murdered on March 16, 1792, at a masked ball in Stockholm's Opera House. Mr. Palme was gunned down on Feb. 28 after seeing a film, the Brothers Mozart, set in the 18th century.

The king, murdered as a result of a conspiracy by his nobles, disregarded a warning that there was a plot to kill him and went to the fatal ball unprotected. Mr. Palme was without his bodyguards when the unknown killer struck.

Hager said the two victims also had certain personal qualities in common. A contemporary described King Gustav as a man "of great genius and wit, cunning and political shrewdness," characteristics also ascribed to Mr. Palme.

Pakistanis doubt Indian pledge not to attack atomic plants

ISLAMABAD (R) — Almost three-quarters of all Pakistanis doubt recent Indian promises not to attack Islamabad's nuclear facilities, according to an opinion poll published here Wednesday.

But fears about a war in the near future between Pakistan and India, which have fought three times since 1947, have receded following a summit between the two nations in December, the Pakistan Institute of Public Opinion (PIPO) said.

PIPO said 71 per cent of the people polled did not trust the promise made by Indian Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi when he and President Mohammad Zia Ullah pledged not to attack each other's nuclear plants.

But the New Delhi meeting calmed some fears about a war between the neighbours. Only 15 per cent of those polled last month rated the chances of a conflict as very high compared with 26 per cent surveyed just before the Dec. 17 meeting.

Respondents ruling out any war

rose from 14 per cent in December to 24 per cent in February, PIPO said.

Respondents interviewed in 100 cities and towns all over Pakistan strongly supported more trade and freedom of movement between the two countries.

PIPO said 72 per cent favoured more trade, 70 per cent wanted more tourism and 67 per cent supported student exchanges.

But only 54 per cent wanted exchanges of radio and television programmes, 45 per cent supported visits by cultural groups and 40 per cent said Indian movies should be imported.

Indian films are technically illegal in Pakistan but are widely available and popular on videocassettes.

PIPO did not interpret the reluctance to accept more cultural exchanges with India.

Many conservative religious groups in Muslim Pakistan object to opening the door to what they consider un-Islamic influences from mainly Hindu India.

COLUMNS 7 & 8

Angry man bites off policeman's ear

CAPE TOWN (R) — A South African motorist who bit off a policeman's ear in a fit of rage has been sentenced to 600 hours of periodic imprisonment. Edward John Pieterse, 27, was also given a suspended jail sentence by a magistrate for escaping on the way to a police station, the Cape Times reported. He was fined for negligent driving. The court heard that Pieterse lost his temper when stopped by the traffic officer, hit him, kicked him and bit his ear off. Pieterse will serve his prison sentence at weekends so that he can keep his job.

Valuables recovered from Soviet ship

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP) — Navy divers Wednesday recovered two safes containing passengers' valuables from the sunken Soviet liner Mikhail Lermontov, the ship's agents said. The strongboxes were to be transported to Wellington and opened within the next few days in the presence of Soviet officials, ship's agents and the government receiver of wrecks. Les Goss, managing director of the travel company CTC, the ship's agents, said the safes contained passengers' valuables and jewellery. He did not know their value nor their condition. Divers meanwhile continued to search for the body of Soviet crewman Pavel Zagladinov, who is presumed to have drowned when the 20,000-ton liner sank.

Campaign to save toads squashed on roads

LONDON (R) — British motorists are being urged to "help a toad across the road" to stop an annual squelch under tyres of an estimated 20 tonnes of toads. The campaign, coordinated by the British Fauna and Flora Preservation Society, began this week with road signs going up in nearly 200 places round Britain warning motorists to take care of toads migrating across roads this spring. The society is selling bumper-bar stickers with the campaign slogan "help a toad across the road."

Trial of 'clockwork orange gang' starts

ROME (R) — Fifty-nine people known as the "clockwork orange gang" because of their alleged brutality went on trial on charges including robbery, rape and kidnapping. The gang committed 700 robberies in wealthy northern suburbs of Rome between 1979 and 1983, snatching jewels and other valuables worth \$10 million, according to the prosecution. Italian newspapers dubbed them "the clockwork orange gang" after the novel by British author Anthony Burgess, because of their callous, often gratuitous violence. A group of three men usually laid in wait for wealthy couples returning home in the early hours and forced them at gunpoint to hand over valuables. In several cases gang members raped or slashed the faces of victims, according to the prosecution. Film producers, actors and actresses, singers and sportsmen were among the gang's victims.

Raids on 'black economy' nets \$13.8m

NEW DELHI (AP) — Assets worth nearly \$14 million were seized in three months during raids on the country's thriving "black economy," the Indian Parliament was told. Minister of State for Finance Jaganmohan Poojary said large amounts of cash and jewels were among the hidden assets worth 166.4 million rupees (\$13.8 million) seized in 1,777 raids conducted from November through January. He said authorities also recovered foreign currency notes worth \$577,000. A recent study by the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy said so-called "black money" totalled about \$30 billion last year, the equivalent of one-fifth of India's gross national product.

2 confess part in Aquino murder, implicate Marcos

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — The court that acquitted former military chief Gen. Fabian Ver and 25 others of assassinating opposition leader Benigno Aquino will resign, the Philippine News Agency said Wednesday.

The report came hours after an attorney in the case said two of the accused have confessed and implicated deposed President Ferdinand Marcos, his wife and four other former high officials in the 1983 slaying of the man whose widow now rules the country.

None of the nine justices on the tribunal, which normally handles cases of government graft and cor-

ruption, could be located for comment.

President Corason Aquino has asked all officials of the Marcos government, including judges, to resign.

PNA said the court's presiding justice, Manuel Pamaran, called the court's other justices to a meeting Wednesday where they all agreed to hand their resignations.

Pamaran headed the three-member division that acquitted Gen. Ver and the others last Dec. 2 after throwing out the main evidence gathered by a civilian board that investigated the assassination.

Botha's Namibia offer greeted with scepticism

WINDHOEK, Namibia (South West Africa) (R) — Bitterly divided political leaders in Namibia displayed rare unanimity Wednesday in discounting South Africa's latest offer for ending its illegal rule in the disputed territory. South African President P.W. Botha told parliament in Cape Town Tuesday that a long-delayed United Nations plan for independence in the vast desert region should be set in motion on Aug. 1.

But he announced no breakthrough on the major problem blocking independence — Pretoria's long-standing demand that some 35,000 Cuban troops pull out of Namibia's neighbour Angola before South Africa leaves the mineral-rich territory.

Dirk Mudge, a leader of the interim Namibian government installed by Pretoria last June despite world condemnation, told Reuters the latest move was likely to go the same way as previous failed attempts at a solution.

"I have seen it all before. I don't think this will lead anywhere," he said.

His government's main antagonist, the South West Africa Peoples Organisation (SWAPO), which has been fighting a 20-year-old guerrilla war in the region, said Mr. Botha was trying to shift the blame for lack of progress on to Angola.

Mr. Botha said that before his proposed implementation of the 1978 U.N. Security Council Resolution 435, "a firm and satisfactory" accord must be reached on removing the Cuban contingent, which has been helping Luanda's government in a bitter civil war since independence from Portugal in 1975.

The extreme right-wing white Conservative Party criticised the lifting of the emergency, referring to continued violence and guerrilla operations.

"By lifting the state of emergency, the state president is creating the false impression that the security position in the country has improved, while the revolutionary are in fact busy sharpening their onslaught," said party spokesman Louis Theunissen.

Meanwhile a black woman was killed when a hand grenade was hurled into a house and two black men died in separate incidents as violence continued overnight in South Africa, police said.

The renewed violence came only hours after Mr. Botha said the unrest in the country had calmed sufficiently for the state of emergency to be lifted, probably on Friday.

A police spokesman said the grenade was thrown into a house in Ateridgeville township near Pretoria killing the woman and injuring two men.

He said that one man was killed and four others injured when police used shotguns to disperse a crowd after vehicles were petrol-bombed at Kanana, near Orkney in the western Transvaal.

China jails Soviet hijacker

PEKING (R) — A court in the north east Chinese city of Harbin has jailed a Soviet hijacker for eight years, but a Foreign Ministry spokesman Wednesday declined to discuss his motive or the possibility of extradition.

Shamil Gadji Ogly Alimuradov, 33, was found guilty Tuesday of unlawful seizure of an aircraft.

Alimuradov, co-pilot of an Antonov-24 aircraft on a domestic Aeroflot flight on Dec. 19 last year, forced the plane to land on a rough airstrip in the north Chinese province of Heilongjiang. The plane and the other 42 people on board were returned to the Soviet Union almost immediately.

Asked at a press conference what the motive for the hijacking was or whether it was likely Alimuradov would be extradited to the Soviet Union to serve part of the sentence, the Chinese spokesman would only say: "No comment."

But he said Alimuradov had the right to appeal against the sentence.

China has ignored a Soviet request for the hijacker's extradition, but East European sources said

they thought it was likely he would be sent back to the Soviet Union, perhaps later this year.

The sources said Alimuradov was believed to be from the Azerbaijan region of the Soviet Union.

Western diplomats said eight years seemed to be a reasonably light sentence, but they pointed out that no one was reported hurt in the incident.

"They perhaps took into account the fact that he is a foreigner," said one diplomat. "But eight years in a Chinese prison would not be pleasant."

Five Chinese youth were executed in 1983 after they attempted to hijack a plane on a domestic Chinese flight. Several passengers and crew members were injured in that incident during which a large hole was blown in the side of the aircraft.

Tamil rebels kidnap 100 Sri Lankan village officials

COLOMBO (R) — Tamil separatist guerrillas Wednesday kidnapped about 100 village officials in Sri Lanka's northern Jaffna city, residents said.

They said the officials, known as Grama Sevaks, were walking to the military base at Jaffna Fort to meet the northern security forces commander when guerrillas forced them into vans and drove away.

No reason was given for the abductions. But residents said the guerrillas opposed any dialogue between the officials, who were all Tamils, and military authorities.

The guerrillas are fighting for a separate state for Sri Lanka's minority Tamil community.

A Defence Ministry spokesman in Colombo said authorities were checking the reported kidnappings.

The abductions came as the Indian High Commission in Colombo denied newspaper reports here that an Indian naval craft had helped guerrillas get away after they attacked a Sri Lankan naval unit on an island off Jaffna.

The state-run daily news said one guerrilla was killed on Monday when fishermen fired at rebels who harassed them.

It quoted a National Security Ministry spokesman as saying: "What was significant about this incident is that the rest of the gang swam to an Indian craft bearing the marking L-17. This was not a fishing vessel."

Other press reports identified the vessel as an Indian naval craft.

An Indian High Commission spokesman denied the allegation, saying: "Our naval ships remain within our territorial waters."

GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN
AND OMAR SHARIF
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AVOID THE PROBLEM

Neither vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH

♠ K J

♥ 10 5 2

♦ Q J 6

♣ A 10 8 3 2

WEST

♠ 6 5 3

♥ 2

♦ Q 9 8 7 6

♣ K 10 9 2

EAST

♠ Q 9 8 7 6

♥ K J 5

♦ A Q 10 9 8 7 4

♣ A K 4 3

SOUTH

♠ A Q 10 9 8 7 4

♥ A K 4 3

♦ A 4

♣ Vaid

The bidding:

South West North East

1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass

3 ♠ Pass 4 ♠ Pass

5 ♠ Pass 6 ♠ Pass

Opening lead: Jack of ♣.

It is all very well to have enough

tricks for your contract. You have

to be sure that you can take them

safely.

The point of interest is the auction

is North's preference to three

spades. He did not want to dampen

South's ardor by bidding three no

trump with two honors in his partner's

first-bid suit, and no other

choice made sense. The final

contract of six spades was eminently

reasonable.

West led the jack of hearts and

declarer could count 11 tricks

— seven spades, two hearts, and the

two minor suit aces. A 12th trick

could be established in diamonds,

but there was a problem.

It looked as if West's opening

lead might be a singleton. If

declarer drew two rounds of trumps

before playing on diamonds, he

would have to rely on a diamond

finesse for his fulfilling trick,

because dummy would be entryless.

And if he went after a second

diamond trick immediately by playing

ace and another, he could run into a

ruff.

Declarer found a pretty solution.

He won the ace of hearts, cashed

the ace of diamonds and then

entered dummy with a trump. On

the ace of clubs he stuffed his low

diamond, then he led the queen of

diamonds for a ruffing finesse. Bar-

ring a freak distribution, his contract

was safe.

If East had the king of diamonds

and covered, declarer would ruff,

enter dummy with the remaining

trump and discard a heart loser on

the jack of diamonds. Thus, declarer

would lose only one heart trick.